A

MENTAL TOOTH-PICK

FOR

THE FAIR SEX;

OR,

SOMETHING USEFUL *to occupy their* TIME, *in the Abſence of* BETTER AMUSEMENT.

La prudence nous conduit a une vie aiſee et tranquille, que tous les emplois bruyans ou autres accompliſſemens ne peuvent nous donner.

Prudence conducts us through life with that eaſe and tranquillity, which all the boaſted offices of other accompliſhments can never confer.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY SCHAW AND PILLANS;

And ſold by J. GUTHRIE, Nicholſon's Street, and W. DICKSON, High Street, Edinburgh.

1797.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

Entered in Stationers Hall.

TO

CLEMENTINA GOODALL.

WHAT a pity that ſo handſome a name ſhould be ſo often and ſo much abuſed! It is ſome ſmall conſolation, however, that the ſeaſon is faſt approaching, when in reality it will be ſaluted with proper reſpect. We are aſſured, that in the realms of never-ending day, neither a counterfeit nor baſe metal, though ever ſo nicely gilded, ſhall paſs for current coin. And it were to be wiſhed, that, even in the preſent ſtate, the diſtinction was ſomewhat more minutely obſerved. Clementina, my addreſs to thee ſhall not

conſiſt in flowers of learning, poliſhed periods, or nicely ſtudied compliments; a few plain truths, expreſſed in ſimple language, is all thou haſt to expect: and if this mode ſhould happen to hit thy taſte, ſo much the better for me. It is true, in many dedications it is uſual to rifle the apartments of the dead, and bring back a long liſt of anceſtors, with their wonderful atchievements; ornamented with all the ſtudied decorations of highly exaggerated praiſe; but as I am not ſo well acquainted with your relations, as would be neceſſary for a juſt delineation of their reſpective characters, ſuch an omiſſion will require no apology. I am ſorry to ſay, that even my intimacy with yourſelf was too much in the *en paſſant* ſtyle: therefore my whole panegyric ſhall conſiſt of this ſingle obſervation, that you appeared modeſt, comely, and well-made. If this account ſhould chance to meet your eye, and you ſhould be able to know yourſelf, and find from this

mode

mode of addreſs who I am, I ſhall ſurely reſpect your ingenuity, and allow you more than ordinary penetration. If Fate, as I ſincerely wiſh it may, ſhould conſent to our better acquaintance, and that I find your other accompliſhments correſpond to your external appearance, I ſhall be more liberal in my future encomiums; and till that is the caſe, I hope you will excuſe me for being ſo reſerved. Adieu,

Dear Clementina,

And believe me to be yours with the ſincereſt reſpect and eſteem,

Candid-hall, May 1797. PHILOGUNA.

N.B. It was ſaid of a painter, not very remarkable in his profeſſion, that upon ſhewing the great Apelles a picture of his, and informing him at the ſame time, that he had taken but a few hours to finiſh it, he received this reply, "Though you had not told me ſo, yet I plainly

ſee cauſe enough to believe, that it is no more than a haſty draught." An apology, or expreſſions ſimilar to this obſervation, was juſt what I once intended; but I have now thought of changing this cant, and, inſtead of telling the world that it is the haſty production of a few days, I think it is better to be modeſt, and ſay nothing about the time I employed in preparing it, leſt I ſhould only betray my ignorance and ſelf-conceit; acquaintances with which I may be familiar enough, though I ſhould not publiſh it to the world, by ſuch faſhionable excuſes. It would ſeem, from my being ſo very fond of my own invention, that I really thought others would be equally ſo; and that it would be a great diſappointment to the impatient crowd, who were eagerly gaping to ſwallow my wonderful performance, if they were not as rapidly favoured with it, as I had been in preparing it. But theſe ideas in reality I do not entertain. I am perfectly convinced,

vinced, that the world would not miſs either myſelf or my child; but if the judicious part of mankind will ſuffer this production to paſs unmoleſted, I ſhall thank them for their kindneſs. I care not from what motive the indulgence proceeds, whether from compaſſion or approbation; though I muſt confeſs, that the latter is what I ſhould wiſh to merit. I know full well, that the Public is not to be much intereſted in the fate of my Pick, but it concerns me to make ſuch conceſſions as are conſiſtent with plain honeſty. Original colouring is the principal feature of this performance. Some thoughts, I acknowledge, are borrowed, and manufactured in my own ſtyle; ſuch paſſages as I thought related to my ſubject, I have liberally quoted. But even after this confeſſion, I by no means conſider it as a ſpurious progeny. If any perſon ſhould ſay otherwiſe, however, and claim it as his own property, I ſhall not think it worth while to

quarrel

quarrel with him, ſend him a challenge, nor even trouble him with much contradiction.

MENTAL

MENTAL TOOTH-PICK.

Great bleſſings ever wait on virtuous deeds,
And though a late, a ſure reward ſucceeds.

CONGREVE.

I have always been of opinion, that witticiſm in poſſeſſion of an ill-natured or imprudent perſon is a dangerous weapon. Though ever ſo innocent, it ſhould be cautiouſly employed. A ſatiriſt and lampooner, who are in their element only when their captious humour inflames as it operates, are neither proper ſubjects of panegyric, nor fit copies for imitation.—Therefore my Pick ſhall ſmell but little of their oil.

It is not neceſſary to import the materials of my ſimple inſtrument from foreign lands; nor are the mines of Peru the proper place to find them; they lie within the reach of all who ſigh for

for an acquaintance with virtue, of all who revere her venerable form; for in mental reflection the ſearch is gratified, and the ſecret diſcovered. I have ſerved an apprenticeſhip under the influence of the torrid zone, and know the ſuperiority of an accompliſhed female too well, ever to diſreſpect that valuable character. I ſhould not in the leaſt quarrel with any ſenſible writer, for inverting the propoſition of a great moraliſt in the following manner: A candid virtuous female is the nobleſt work of God, and the brighteſt part of the creation.

From this plain declaration, the female of reputation may eaſily perceive, ſhe has nothing to dread from the pen of one who ever has, and ſtill continues to wear, the livery of ſincere affection. If the cauſe of female merit ſhould receive no great luſtre from ſo weak an advocate, that of innocence ſhall never ſuffer any falſe conſtruction, or ungenerous repreſentation, from any feeble effort of mine.

Having proceeded thus far in the ſtyle of egotiſm, which an eminent character, who was well acquainted with the rules of politeneſs, and knew equally well how to deſcribe the eſſentials

of

of good breeding, ſo much and ſtrongly diſcommends, I ſhall take an opportunity of entering into a more eligible direction, as ſoon as I can get rid of a neceſſary prelude, which requires ſome little inveſtigation.

Some may apprehend, that a tooth-pick is a piece of furniture that can eaſily be wanted; and that many uſe it more by way of ornament, than as an inſtrument neceſſary for removing pain, or promoting pleaſure. Small as it is, however, unleſs ingeniouſly managed, it may commit leſs or more miſchief; it may wound the tongue, and give a cloudy colour to the gums. But if, upon reflection, its good qualities are found to overbalance any inconvenience or bad effects that may attend its uſe, it would be improper to lay it aſide, and noways criminal to employ ſo ſmall a piece of luxury. Crumbs of food, lying in a ſtate of putrefaction, are of a corroſive nature, and in a ſhort time may hurt the enamel of the teeth. Removing this preſſure is of great advantage, as it helps to keep them clean, and to preſerve their poliſh; and a caſe of beautiful teeth is no ſmall ornament, to either male or female: if, then, it is found ſo neceſſary for the body,

body, why may not one be invented for the mind? and as I ſuppoſe mine is the firſt that has been made of the mental kind, I hope, if females of character (the only part of the ſex whoſe good opinion I am deſirous to obtain) do not think me deſerving of a premium, they will at leaſt approve of my Pick, for the novelty of the phraſe. In every well regulated ſociety, where the periods of civilization extend their graceful progreſs, the mechanical labour of the artiſt, in every new invention, where any degree of ingenuity is diſplayed, calls for the eye of public inſpection, to examine its value, conſtruction, and ſymmetry; and praiſe is annexed to the performance, correſponding in ſome meaſure to the inventor's merit. A patent, to perpetuate his memory, is granted by public authority; he receives a generous reward, accompanied with ſonorous peals of applauſe. Have I any claim to ſuch expectations or privileges? Alas! my flattering career has now loſt its wheels, and my ſoaring hope is deprived of its wings; for all I have to boaſt of, is no more than coining a new epithet for reflection. If my ſincerity, and the honeſty of my intention, fail to procure me the good-

will

will of mankind, I doubt much of meeting it in the way of merit.

An eminent writer juſtly obſerves, with his uſual flowers of elegance, "That the acknowledgement of thoſe virtues on which conſcience congratulates us, is a tribute that we can at any time exact with confidence; but the celebration of thoſe virtues we only feign or deſire, without any vigorous endeavours to attain them, is received as a triumph over regions, not yet conquered."—Delightful ſcenes pleaſe a correct taſte, and the benefit of information will always excite the induſtry of thoſe who ſearch for refinement.

The female who is familiar with labours of merit, who longs to learn what is beautiful in the production of arts, as well as what is ingenious in the delineation of morals, will not in the leaſt be offended to meet here with a beautiful quotation from a maſterly pencil, on the ſubject of education: "Should a maſter, after having given his pupil a few lectures on the elements of grammar, leave him at liberty to make the beſt of his way through the claſſes, without giving him the leaſt aſſiſtance in the progreſs of his ſtudies,

or pointing out the uſe and application of the neceſſary rules as he advanced in his learning, is it to be thought from this ſuperficial inſtruction he would be found a complete ſcholar? Common ſenſe will at once make the proper reply; and ſhall leſs pains or care be thought ſufficient to nurſe the virtues of the heart? to form him a good man, or a valuable member of the community to which he belongs? Is it eaſier, after having learned the rudiments of knowledge and morality, for a character to guide himſelf with nice taſte, or correct judgement, in the labyrinth of life, and ſteer unſhaken, in full triumph, a ſteady courſe of virtue, through the ſhoals, rocks, and all the other dangers he has to encounter, in a veſſel without ballaſt, ignorant of her motion, and the ſkill required in her management, to ſubdue the ſwelling tide of corruption, and the boiſterous ſtorms of paſſion, than to underſtand the ſenſe of a Roman or a Greek author?" When Ulyſſes intruſted the education of his ſon to the nobles of Ithaca, to one of them, in particular, he enforces the charge with this affectionate addreſs, "O my friend, if ever you loved his father, ſhew him ſome proof of it in your care of his ſon, but

above

above all do not omit to form him juſt, ſincere, and faithful."

The beſt method (ſays Socrates to his pupil Alcibiades) that you can make uſe of to draw the bleſſings of heaven upon yourſelf, and to render your prayers acceptable, will be found connected with the conſtant practice of your duty towards God and men. From theſe examples, we plainly ſee the anxiety which prevailed, in the former ages of the world, for improving the youthful mind. It would be a pity, if the preſent race and æra, ſo far advanced in refinement, ſhould in any point or ſcience have cauſe to bluſh at a compariſon with ancient days. When a painter examines a new picture, he not only attends to the brightneſs of the colours, but the delicacy of the connected parts, and the art by which the whole is conducted. It is the nice junction or uniformity of the concordant lines, that principally excite notice, and furniſh matter for approbation. Though I cannot promiſe my reader a model of finiſhed arrangement, or elegance of conception, ſtill a deſire to trace the pure ſprings of truth, reaſon, and religion, I

flatter myſelf, will apologiſe for my defects, and procure me ſome little indulgence.

Refinement of mind, in every age and country, has been always thought the principal part of beauty. If education is admitted to be an effectual mean of attaining this rich ornament, then it is a ſelf-evident truth, that it can never be too ſtrongly recommended, nor too cloſely cultivated. Is the contemplation of female elegance, wherever it is ſeen, an object of delight? Is not the tribute of reſpect, and the partiality paid to it, when it appears to advantage, a powerful motive for encouraging a ſpirit of improvement? Let us pauſe a little, and look around us, let us ſee how much birth itſelf is adorned by a regular education; how a genteel female, by the careful labour of a few years, riſes to notice and reſpect, and ſtands poſſeſſed of ornaments that will remain in honour till the lateſt period of life; ornaments which have the initials of knowledge, goodneſs of heart, and genuine religion, ſtrongly impreſſed on their front; though they ſhould not be altogether the tone of the times, nor particularly in vogue, the improvement of ſuch laſting ornaments cannot fail, in the courſe of years, to

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reflect luſtre and credit on the wiſe female who has judgement ſufficient to diſcern their value, and ſteadineſs enough to perſevere in their purſuit. A conſtant and juſt ſenſe of decorum in every opening ſcene, imparts the pureſt emotions of pleaſure. How refined are her enjoyments, whoſe taſte is regulated by the dictates of a well-informed mind. The eye of penetration muſt admire the female who is capable of being charmed, and of charming in her turn. The advantages of birth or fortune may ſecure the adoration of the vulgar; but ſhe who excels in mental refinement, courteous behaviour, and an agreeable temper, ſhows the eſſentials of a correct and delicate beauty;—ornaments which command the reſpect of ſuperior taſte, of thoſe who more highly admire the merit of a ripe underſtanding, than the accidental advantages of external form. The charms of novelty, like the unſettled bloſſoms of ſpring, wear a dazzling appearance, but are eaſily defaced; and when once they fade can never be renewed. The flighty character, like a temporary ballad, is only in requeſt for a little while; but a modeſt ſenſible female will long continue to ſupport her character. Curioſity is

awakened at the firſt ſight of an elegant dome, but it is the riches within that eſtabliſhes its laſting fame. The merit of a female is not altogether to be eſtimated from her great qualities, it is the placing them in a proper attitude that ſhows them advantageouſly. A ſoil, though originally fertile, if left without culture, will ſoon contract barrenneſs, and wear the face of a lonely deſert; whereas a piece of land naturally ſterile, and of a ſurface ſeemingly crowded with inequalities, by the ingenious hand of induſtry, may be made in a ſhort time, not only to compenſate the cultivator's toil, but even to vie with the firſt-rate productions of nature. The Grecians improved the arts and ſciences to ſuch a height, that the claim of competition was every where relinquiſhed, and the laurels of knowledge flouriſhed at Athens, with a degree of verdure which at that time appeared to ſurpaſs the reſt of the world. Neighbouring nations admired their genius, and conſidered them as finiſhed and inſtructive examples for their careful imitation.

If writers deſcribe the Turks as ſomewhat ſlow or phlegmatic in mental proficiency, they take care to ſupply that deficiency by cloathing them

them with beauties no leſs engaging: they ſpeak of their morals as gracefully poliſhed, and almoſt irreproachable: for moderation of their paſſions, and fidelity to their word, they are allowed to be peculiarly diſtinguiſhed. The Romans, early in life, acquired a taſte peculiar to themſelves. Female education was conſidered as a matter of the utmoſt importance. Matrons of eſtabliſhed reputation were looked upon with reſpect, and as mothers to whom the ſacred pledges of affection, diſtinguiſhed either by character or family, might be ſafely intruſted. What a pleaſant taſk to guide the tender mind with prudence and ſafety, over the falſe and dangerous rocks that lie concealed in the ſea of life, and of which the thoughtleſs inexperience of youth could have no juſt conception. Who then ſo fit for this important duty, as a virtuous female, rendered venerable by age, and diſtinguiſhed by ſolidity of judgement, who poſſeſſes an extenſive ſtock of knowledge, and is univerſally reſpected as the honour of her ſex. Judicious ſentiments, expreſſed in plain language, unſophiſticated reaſoning on intellectual accompliſhments, and daily leſſons on moral purity, as

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the greateſt ornament of the ſex, would ſound from the lips of ſuch a character, with a ſtrain of the powerfulleſt eloquence: and when a fair copy of the inſtructions ſhe inculcated was expreſſively repreſented in her own conduct, they could ſcarcely fail to be irreſiſtibly impreſſive.

"In articles of taſte and luxury," as obſerved by a very learned writer, "the demand appears ſo arbitrary, as ſcarce to be reducible to any eſtabliſhed rules." Notwithſtanding of this aſſertion, the figures and numbers which compoſe the character of beauty, may in ſome meaſure be diſcovered without the art of logic. In my opinion, it is not neceſſary to ranſack the field of literature for information on the point; it ſurely conſiſts in the harmony of the heart, and the fabric is formed by the continued union of the richeſt materials. A natural honeſty of look, ſupported by conſcioufneſs of rectitude, triumphs over all artificial beauty. Regular features, brightened by goodneſs of heart, and mildneſs of diſpoſition, like the ſhades in painting, give relief to neighbouring virtues, and make the whole figure altogether lovely. Taſte, roufed by emulation, refines gradually; and from a careful

careful imitation of beauties, the mind imperceptibly advances towards its higheſt improvement. But where no ſuperior model appears to be conſulted, or to excite laudable ambition, the field of refinement muſt be barren indeed. Though I thought to have made a new diſcovery that had eſcaped the notice of the learned, I find myſelf ſo much entangled, that I muſt relinquiſh my own fanciful excurſion, and coincide with information more ripe than my own. It is true, if we conſult the collected treaſures of the hiſtorian, or peruſe the laboured periods of the poet, we ſhall find their delineation of characters commonly drawn from the flowers of the heart, or the rich colours of virtue. But if we look around us, and examine human nature with any degree of attention, we ſhall find, that the moſt of mankind judge of beauty agreeably to their own fancy or caprice; ſome, from the wild conceits of a vitiated imagination, and others from reaſon and a correct taſte. If the opinion of my landlady is aſked, I think her ſentiments will be much in this ſtyle: "She that has feweſt faults, and acts beſt." The affable modeſt look, the benevolence which tenderly breathes

breathes in every expreſſion, and ſoftly ſmiles in every duty; theſe, in her book of calculation, are firſt-rate ornaments: Theſe will endure the ſummer heat, and winter's cold, and will not fall like leaves in autumn. Such genuine marks of diſtinction will always continue engaging, and ſhe who is in poſſeſſion of ſo much grace will find her jubilee return with every riſing ſun; for the outward endowments of nature, or the higheſt improvements of art, when compared with the goodneſs of the heart, are low and artificial. This idea of beauty is very neceſſary to be encouraged at all times, particularly in early life, not only becauſe the moſt important, but the firſt impreſſions are moſt likely to continue, eſpecially when the underſtanding afterwards finds ſufficient reaſon to juſtify its early partiality. When, with the dawning of the day, every elegant accompliſhment is carefully nurſed, and the mind by habit accuſtomed to contemplations of refinement, in the future progreſs of life, it will never (without reluctance) exchange its own approved poſſeſſions, for leſs valuable, or unexamined acquiſitions.

A great moraliſt, who had a competent knowledge

ledge of the human heart, and whoſe poetical diction, and ſtrength of compoſition, would merit approbation in any age, whoſe ſentiments are the language of experience, whoſe intimacy with human nature is ſo great, and whoſe knowledge of the world is ſo ingeniouſly introduced into his writings, that a reader of ordinary penenetration muſt admire the compaſs of his abilities, and even feel the force of his reaſoning, tells us, when the gay ſeaſon of life, in its various periods, is effectually ſecured, to give credit and belief to the council of wiſdom, that the mind, in every period of its virtuous progreſs, poſſeſſes the beſt cauſe for rejoicing, and will not fail to exhibit the plan of this happy improvement to the years of maturity, with invariable delight. A continued ſenſe of propriety, or a delicate taſte for what is honourable, makes the ſoul ſhudder at the reality, and even at the very ſhadow, of what is criminal. It is a fact not to be diſputed, that both male and female naturally partake of the prevailing habits of their company, or the quality of the employments with which they are moſt familiar: Therefore this leſſon of early cultivation is in itſelf

itſelf ſo advantageous, that none ſenſible of its uſefulneſs will ever wiſh to reſiſt its influence, or think its authority intolerable. The plain injunctions recommended are the very precepts that a judicious parent, concerned for the credit of his family, or the happineſs of a promiſing offspring, would ſincerely dictate; and what no children, but ſuch as are evidently on the road to ruin, would ever treat with diſdain. Serious impreſſions of religion, which comprehend the beſt definition of moral beauty, are not only the origin of reputation, but the fountain of uncontaminated pleaſure. Improvement in this ſage ſcience forbids no enjoyment to which common ſenſe would give its conſent, or diſcretion deſire to poſſeſs. If the muſical voice of piety was underſtood in its proper acceptation, the honour of God regarded, or the dignity of human nature properly ſupported, too much care could ſcarcely be taken, in the morning of life, to create and encourage the nobleſt train of reflections.

This digreſſion, the courteous reader, I hope, will not conſider as wandering from the main point, or in the leaſt loſing ſight of the ſubject

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in contemplation. To give as little foundation as poſſible to the language of complaint, I ſhall here reſume the former theme. Is genteel education become an object of particular attention? and is the affection of parents ſenſibly awakened to behold the improvement it is able to confer? No criterion can diſtinguiſh partiality to a favourite more conſpicuouſly, than the adorning of her mind with every neceſſary beauty, and looking often with a watchful eye at her morals. A female ſtands in the ſame degree of conſanguinity to her connections, is perhaps as capable of receiving inſtruction as any of her family, and poſſibly makes a brighter figure in the art ſhe ſtudies; of courſe has the beſt claim to an equal ſhare of tenderneſs and attention. The principal parts of her education, in modern times, conſiſt in French, dancing, drawing, and muſic, and all theſe are highly ornamental, when what is more eſſential is cultivated with the ſame degree of ſerioufneſs.

A young female is often hurried to town, and immediately taken to a boarding-ſchool, as the centre of every accompliſhment. Here ſhe finds new aſſociates, who require new manners: big

with every enterprise, and elated with every hope, however vague, the imagination is soon glazed over with the most fanciful, as well as the most flattering ideas. Chimerical figures of fashion and empty pageantry, are considered as the summit of human happiness. While the judgement is not perfectly ripe, how easy for the draughts of fiction to steal forward into favour, and by unfair colouring to keep virtues of the first quality at an awful distance. The gay female enters the world, with every happy prejudice in her favour; she imagines herself certain of accomplishing her purposes, and of obtaining the rewards due to established merit.

When the Sirens of flattery are high in favour, the eye is entertained with whatever they think beautiful; and Vanity's sickly appetite is regaled with their various delicacies: The treasures of delight are every where laid open, and novelty blooms alike on every hand.

Thus do the smiles of fancy diffuse their whimsical and unsteady rays, like the ancient Scythians, who, by extending their conquests over distant regions, left their own throne vacant to their slaves. Where prejudices blind the mind, and

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the fogs of deluſion darken the planet of refinement! truth and impartiality are not ſeen in their native colours, nor are their inſtructive voices diſtinctly underſtood. Though the ſcenes of happineſs lurk under no foreign maſk, the ſearch is often made where only the ſhadow is found, and that ſhadow is without hefitation taken for the ſubſtance. The ſong of hope extends its enchanting ſound, and the inexperienced heart rejoices in its melody; each day ſwells with the reflux of pleaſures, variable as the cauſe from which they originate.

Thoſe precious hours deſigned for improvement, are devoted to cards, or other inſignificant paſtimes, inſtead of being uſefully employed in collecting materials of taſte, calculated to enlarge the ſphere of refinement, or promote employments more rational.

The tranſactions of the day are ſoon hurried over. Reflections which require deep penetration are troubleſome, and therefore are ſoon diſmiſſed, leſt they ſhould ſadden the thoughts, and ſpoil the appetite for light amuſements. A rapid current of converſation rolls on the milliner, the mantuamaker, and a numberleſs group of other

figures, found neceſſary to employ the tongue without intermiſſion. Concerts of muſic and public aſſemblies are current courſes of entertainment; how ſuch a one danced, how elegant her perſon, what a degree of dignity in her carriage, but not a ſingle expreſſion about the propriety of her conduct, or the refinement of her underſtanding. Theſe ſubjects are airy and inſinuating, and the ſchool of meditation, in which the young female but too much delights. A latitude of this nature, in connection with a narrow ſet of principles, or a confined view of human nature, cramp the ſpirit of improvement, and help to encourage ſtrong prepoſſeſſions either for or againſt matters of no great importance. In the open unſuſpicious ſeaſon of life, opinions ſo diſſeminated, are often greedily imbibed. But having taken root, and being once naturaliſed, it will require more than an ordinary effort entirely to eradicate them. In almoſt every age of the world, it has been leſs or more the practice of philoſophers, poets, and hiſtorians, to laſh the vices of their time, and complain that moral virtues were faſt approaching the borders of depravity; the uſual cant employed to convince us, that former

former generations had carried all the ſpoil of moral improvement, and other valuable bleſſings, along with them to the land of forgetfulneſs, and left only the refuſe of beauty and taſte to their ſucceſſors. For my part, I cannot ſay that I am a convert to this opinion; nor do I ſee any eligible cauſe for ſupporting ſuch reaſoning. And though, from the liberty I have taken, it may be thought I wiſh to lay an embargo on the little levities of youth, I hope my ſentiments ſhall not be underſtood as alluding to the ſex at large, nor as comprehending all our females in one claſs; for I believe the preſent æra may produce as honeſt, virtuous, and finiſhed females, as any of the preceding. The ancients, which many ſeem enthuſiaſtically fond of extolling, I ſuppoſe, differed from thoſe of our own time, only by their dreſs being leſs handſome, their language leſs elegant, their integrity leſs genuine, and themſelves leſs accompliſhed. In opening the views of the youthful mind, and ſuggeſting ſubjects of contemplation, caution, in moſt caſes, is quite requiſite, not only in the choice of chaſte, edifying themes, but alſo in giving the narration an engaging dreſs. Innocent and intereſting

anecdotes might many times be exceeding ſeaſonable, and help to produce a pleaſing effect. The gay colours of vanity, which are ſo ready to inflame, might by ſuch habits be gradually mortified, and the current of thought run with conſtant delight, in the direction of improvement and happineſs.

Innocent amuſement, confined within proper bounds, is ſurely requiſite; and none in poſſeſſion of common ſenſe, or who knows the value of health, will ever diſcommend its effect. But to aſſign it the place of moral improvement, and make it the chief object of purſuit, is a piece of conduct far from deſerving credit, or being worthy of encouragement. Life, when regulated with judgement, is a pleaſing ſcene, rich with beauteous decorations, fruitful in acts of benevolence. An hour once a-day devoted to moral entertainment, would open a door for refinement and attention to the various occurrences, which occupy the ruling thoughts of mankind, in their different attitudes and conſequences; would help to enliven the mind, and lead to a train of uſeful reflections. Inquiry into the quality of virtue, or the deformity of vice, with the lines and colours

colours peculiar to each; theſe or ſimilar lectures would be more than killing time; money beſtowed on a teacher for ſuch a purpoſe, would be profitably ſpent; the advantages of which would appear like the ripe increaſe of harveſt, in the progreſs of future years. A reſpectable character, whoſe name I cannot recollect, ſeriouſly recommends œconomy of taſte. He is quite clear for confining friends, as well as books, to a certain number; deſiring but few of either, if theſe are judiciouſly ſelected. From the merit of the books with which one is familiar, the turn of the mind is ſoon diſcovered; for taſte will naturally ſeek for qualities of its own complexion; as clothes which cover and adorn the body ſhould always be genteel, without affectation. Reading practiſed for improvement, and not for oſtentation, will lay up treaſures of edifying information, which will entertain the intellect, and adorn the converſation. Decency in dreſs ſhews a delicacy of taſte, and a modeſt diffuſion of knowledge adds luſtre to its fair author. Silence frequently performs the office of ſpeech; and this ſort of eloquence ſometimes does more execution than the moſt elegant addreſs; like ſuſ-

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penſions and long pauſes in muſic, which contribute as much to harmony as the moſt melodious notes. "Glittering wares, if continually expoſed, loſe much of their brightneſs, and are eaſily ſtained with much handling." A comely female, the more natural ſhe appears, the more beautiful; ſhe is ſure to loſe nothing by the want of affectation. There would be leſs danger in meeting her adorned with all the advantages of dreſs, than in ſeeing her conduct artfully diſtinguiſhed, by the attractive grace, and deluſive manner of thoſe, who have neither had acceſs to good company, nor enjoyed the benefit of a virtuous education.

Modeſty is a quality ſo acceptable, that it forms an apology for many deficiences, it is an armour ſcarcely to be pierced, and on a ſenſible female fits very handſomely.

"Diſtruſtful ſenſe with modeſt caution ſpeaks,
While flattering nonſenſe in full vollies breaks."

Prudence will act with œconomy in the diſplay of its merit. The diſcreet female will rather content herſelf with having more literary knowledge

knowledge than ſhe chooſes to publiſh, than that others ſhould cenſure her for affecting more than ſhe has. She is not clad in her beſt ſuit at her firſt appearance; but thinks it better to gain ground gradually, than to ſeem retrogade in her motions. A judicious female will cheerfully ſacrifice the light amuſement of a dance, the luxury of a repaſt, or any other pleaſure of the ſeaſon, to taſte ſincere and ſolid enjoyment; by cultivating cloſe acquaintance with ſome favourite author, where ſhe finds a laſting feaſt prepared for her mind. I do not think it raſh to cenſure ſome characters, who would be much offended to have their taſte or judgement diſputed, for maintaining that learning and coquetry in a female are ſynonymous terms; and to the embelliſhment of education and ſound ſenſe, uncharitably append the epithet of *affectation*. Though books and their contents are not to employ every hour of the day, the female who is well acquainted with ſuch ſenſible neighbours, is not, in my ſlender judgement, the leſs qualified for ſprightly converſation. A choice collection of books, with an inclination to peruſe them, not only ſteals away the languor of a dull hour,

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but ſtrengthens the underſtanding, quickens the apprehenſion, and renders the company of ſo much excellence a fund of agreeable entertainment. But much depends on the quality of the books, with which one enters into a familiar *tête-à-tête*, and the nature of the ſubject on which they treat. The marvellous and fictitious communicate but a ſlender ſhare of pleaſure, their information having no great connection with truth; therefore it is not to be ſuppoſed, that theſe uncertain guides always point to the path of ſecurity; nay, their courſe is the very reverſe.—Barren uncultivated deſerts are their line of direction, and their falſe colours impoſe on the credulous mind a yoke of deluſion, almoſt equal to Egyptian bondage. And when a taſte for this ſort of reading is once unhappily acquired, a ſtrong effort muſt be made before the reliſh loſes its edge, and the fancy is effectually diſengaged from the falſe ſcenery. Novels, plays, and fables, (excepting a very few indeed), are not productive of the expected inſtruction. But the paſſionate deſire for ſuch paltry productions is perhaps rather a misfortune than a vice; tho' their prevailing tendency is leſs or more to cloud

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he underſtanding, with a vain and trivial train of thought, and are a ſtrong ſtimulation to levity of conduct. The wrong bias, upon the whole, they are calculated to incite, can ſcarcely be compenſated by any gratification their fanciful pages can impart. The propenſity which young perſons early diſcover to ſuch reading, and the partiality they entertain for authors of this deſcription, in my eſtimation, it would be highly proper to repreſs; and what is much more eſſential to their welfare, generouſly pointed out, with all the rich advantages which attend its cultivation. Religious and moral performances, are without diſpute the ſolid foundation on which elegance of taſte may be built, and built with ſafety. Entertainment of this quality, may be compared to a rich valley, abounding every where with correct figures of refinement, fitted both to amuſe the eye, and regale the mind. Dr Blair's ſermons are ſubjects of deſerved fame, and of finiſhed beauty; remarkably diſtinguiſhed by a continued and glowing vein of piety. His tender and inſtructive ſentiments, in every opening page, are full of nouriſhment to virtue; and their elegant language is calculated to gratify the moſt refined and delicate

cate taſte. Reſorting to ſuch poliſhed acquaintances, on a Sunday evening, or any other day of the week that might ſuit the reader's conveniency, would, in my way of thinking, be a practice never out of ſeaſon, never inconſiſtent with any character. They are creditable connections; companions with whom any female, whatever be her diſtinction in life, may deem it an honour to be intimate. The divine who ingeniouſly gives Piety her ſuperlative attire, the moraliſt who points out duty with diſcernment, and the hiſtorian who paints characters and events with truth and accuracy, are ſuch company as will reflect credit on their aſſociates. It is from ſuch ſources that the principal part of mental improvement is to be derived. Virtue, in her natural and moſt engaging colours, Vice, with its gloomy clouds of depravity, with the characters and conſequences peculiar to each, are ſnatched from the jaws of oblivion, and expoſed to public view, for the advantage of ſociety, in the correct and commanding delineation of the maſterly hiſtorian. The annals of barbarous climates, or of the moſt corrupt ages, may, in ſome particular circumſtances, appear to be partially

tially tranſcribed, and probably all the tranſactions may not be recollected juſt ſo minutely as they were originally exhibited; ſtill the principal and leading facts are held up to view in their narrations, with a tolerable degree of preciſion; and they ſeldom loſe ſight of truth, or relate circumſtances which are merely chimerical. In hiſtory, a correct ſphere of action continually engages the attention; you trace the riſe and progreſs of human authority and civilization; ages and countries, the intereſting affairs of nations, appear as objects of contemplation, and continually arreſt the eye of inſpection. The candid hiſtorian ſhatters the ſecret fetters of ignorance, and, without the leaſt reſerve, lays open to the glare of day the flouriſhing ſtate of empires, or the gradual decay of kingdoms: together with the various cauſes from which they might date, either the origin of their fame, or the record of their ruin. The corruption of the world, and the knowledge of human nature, may be learned in hiſtory without expence, and ſeen without a maſk. Whatever error in conduct gave juſt room for cenſure, or forfeited the good opinion of the public, though the ac-

tors are now ſilent, their example continueth to ſpeak. The part entruſted them to execute on the theatre of life, is recorded with its correſponding portion of merit, or demerit. No concealment of the artful ſtratagems, by which inflexible integrity often ſuffered unexpected diſgrace, or undeſerved ruin, or by which the natural pride of power roſe up, like a ſwelling torrent, to demoliſh ſtately fabrics of fame, not to be equalled by fair competition, or the ordinary means of improvement,—is thought neceſſary. Hiſtory gradually unfolds the nature and advantages of different countries; the mildneſs or ſeverity of climates; the ſtrength and intereſt of nations; the rudiments of peace or war; and whatever concerns civil negotiations: it briefly comprehends the productions of art, and the tranſactions of former ages. The different forms of government, and their various revolutions, ſucceed each other in their natural order. The multiplied misfortunes which have been the repeated conſequences of too much ſecurity or remiſſneſs, extravagant competition, or arbitrary ſeverity, the ſage pages of experience openly and clearly deſcribe. So that no age or nation

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can loſe credit, by borrowing caution from the admonition of other countries, and even from tranſactions not very ancient. The malicious deſigns of baſe minds to foment confuſion in a country, or to kindle the fire of anarchy; the various deep-coloured artifices by which popular faction and civil diſcords ſwelled to rapid inundations; the happy cauſes by which the ſcent of dark machinations ſtole from retirement, to diſcover the ſnare, and counteract their horrid influence, before the ſecret ripened into age, or launched into execution; all theſe circumſtances plainly appear, without palliation, or the leaſt apprehenſion of danger. In contemplating the graceful figures, and amuſing ſcenery of the hiſtorian, the reader, at a diſtance from the field of danger, may calmly view battles and ſieges without turmoil; tempeſts and ſhipwrecks, without ſharing in the conflict; the modes and faſhions of other courts and nations, without either the toil of travelling, or the expence of a coſtly purchaſe. In fancy you may proceed to the field of war, and behold a Cæſar, a Scipio, and a group of other ancient and modern heroes, that could eaſily be named, with the fortitude of

ſoldiers, ſupporting fatigue, and communicating courage to all around, by their looks, their addreſs, and their actions, which fly like electricity from rank to rank, till the enthuſiaſm becomes general, and the effect wholly irreſiſtible. You may ſee a vanquiſhed foe, forgetting the horrors of bondage, and gazing with admiration, on the bravery of the hero, who, with the humanity of an angel, ſubdues the proud ſpirit of revenge, and, by unexpected clemency, redoubles the obligations he confers. The advantages to be gained by contemplating the judicious arrangement of an army, the manœuvres to be performed, the danger to be avoided, and the meaſures to be concerted, are alſo numerous and great.

By hiſtory you may be made quite intimate with the moſt diſtant parts of the globe; may become acquainted with the meaſures and treaties, the character and religion, the trade and politics of the Indies, as well as of our own and neighbouring nations. Into the ſecrets of ſtateſmen you are freely admitted, and thoſe actions which it would have been once thought preſumption to oppoſe, you may canvaſs without reſerve, you may praiſe or condemn, agreeable to your

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own inclination, without either the fear of cenſure, or the imputation of flattery. Thoſe principal proceedings may be learned from hiſtory, in one day, which were long in gaining the ſummit of *eclat*, and maintained the fame, or agitated the counſels of nations, for a vaſt number of years.

Cardinal Mazarine is one of the fortunate few, who was greatly beloved, both by prince and ſubject, while living, and who, after his death, was univerſally regretted.

A monument of no leſs reſpect, the Britiſh Cabinet at preſent ſeems to be foſtering, and bringing forward to maturity. If the ſame uniformity ſhould henceforth prevail, that has hitherto regulated Mr P's. meaſures, his friends will have no cauſe to bluſh for his conduct. Let the tongue of candour ſpeak, and the eye of inſpection look around;—to ſuch witneſſes his merit muſt ſeem great, and to ſhine without an eclipſe. As a financier, how inventive and judicious! Reſpecting his abilities as an orator, the elegance of a Cicero, the ſtrength and reaſoning talents of a Demoſthenes, he happily unites in his manly exhibitions.

The chart of life and of hiſtory is a copy of ſomething more ſerious than fancied novelties: each feature is big with facts intereſting in their nature, variegated with extenſive information, and richly clad with the garb of diſtinction; more than obliquely treated by the eye of diſcernment, and the ſcientific pen of genius. In hiſtory you may cull the flowers of every virtue, and leave the thorns of miſery to torment thoſe whoſe complicated follies aroſe to view, in the deceitful paths of falſe deſire. When the game of vice is acted, as it is at all times, and in every country, though not with the ſame degrees of guilt, the fruit of it will leſs or more appear, and the recollection return with freſh aggravation: for the recurrence of ſimilar premiſes cannot fail to produce effects of the ſame nature. The friendly intention that kindly marks out the ſavage rocks, on which virtue and innocence, refinement, fame, and happineſs, recorded their names and character in the liſt of thoſe doomed to be unfortunate,—can never be too highly prized. In every doubtful ſcene, buoys are beheld, and with impreſſive eloquence warn the world of thoſe ſecret dangers and deceitful

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ſhallows, where levity and indiſcretion have frequently felt their folly, and unexpectedly ſtranded all the ill-calculated treaſures of their flattering hopes. You ſee the coſt of lawleſs gratification, minutely diſcerned, and faithfully exhibited. An impartial picture of friendſhip is diſplayed, and cowardly pretenſions to it are ſtript of their artful plumes: the beautiful colours of ſincerity are placed in their proper attitude, and gain the attention of candour and integrity. The converſation of men of letters, who once ſhone in the walk of literature, you may enjoy as your intimate acquaintances, and with them may talk as familiarly as with your neareſt relations. The wiſe precepts of philoſophy, and the juſt diſpoſition of the colours and figures of rhetoric, you may examine at leiſure; and although theſe lectures ſhould not be ſo animating to you, as they have been to thoſe who heard their refined authors, in the flow and fire of declamation, ſtill you may enjoy information, mingled with pleaſure. Their lives and examples continue yet to charm and to inſtruct; their inchanting themes are pregnant with moral virtue; and the great beauty that

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its influence imparts, they felt as well as inculcated; and by ſo doing, plainly pointed to the reward by which the uniform progreſs of virtue and integrity deſerve to be diſtinguiſhed.

The ceremony attending introduction into company, require, in your cloſet with your author, no preparation; nor from a peruſal, if his taſte is good, do you run the leaſt riſk of having your morals tainted with depravity. You have it in your power to chuſe your ſociety, and to continue or diſengage yourſelf from it, juſt as taſte or pleaſure may preſcribe. You need not undergo the penance of a dull anecdote, a tedious narration of trifles, nor the profane converſation of the profligate; but may diſmiſs the haughty and impertinent, without the leaſt fear of being loaded with the epithet of prude or coquette. Hiſtory is a ſafe companion to conſult; it will enable its favourites to form their expreſſions with accuracy, and frame their actions with judgement. To ſpeak in the language of that elegant, inimitable Poet, Mr Thomſon, "She will, from this ſtandard of taſte, refine her own, correct her pencil to the pureſt truth."

A habit of reading with proper penetration, not only ſeizes all the paſſes which commonly lead to the avenue of levity, but alſo feaſts the mind with delicacies, quite remote from the amuſement collected from vulgar prejudices, or ſlovenly expreſſions. From the plain recital of theſe incidents, we may eaſily perceive how highly uſeful it is to be well acquainted with hiſtory, and how richly it contributes to improve the converſation. Thus the amuſement of reading, while regulated with judgement, will at once poliſh the thoughts, refine the underſtanding, and convey wiſdom to the heart, through the medium of pleaſure.

The preſent mode of education, I ſhould think, would ſuffer no depreciation from ſerious and frequent attempts to embelliſh the youthful mind, with a taſte for internal ornament, as well as external decorations; and to direct the principal part of their application, in the opening bloom of life, to the adorning of their judgement with the fair garb of virtue. Moral beauty, early and carefully cultivated, kindly diffuſes over the ſoul, in every period of life, the ſunſhine of deſerved fame, and unclouded happineſs.

Votes

Votes of approbation, may be ſecured by falſe means, but their credit will not be long maintained, unleſs they are ſupported by a firmer foundation. The gems of religion, though they may not have the ſame beauty to every eye, are not the leſs valuable upon that account; the artiſt, without the help of either a touch ſtone or a microſcope, can diſtinguiſh the genuine from the counterfeit. Perhaps candour and truth are in no caſe more neceſſary, than in examining propoſitions where the intereſt of religion is concerned; but if treated with the impartiality ſuitable to her character, ſhe has nothing to fear from the cloſeſt inveſtigation. Some countenances are covered with more than common attraction, and are formed at once to awaken ſurpriſe, and to ſecure virtue againſt the hoſtile attempts of malice and rudeneſs. Beauty is ever accompanied with genuine ſimplicity; whoſe unaffected features are ſo plain and engaging, that the fair actreſs ſteals upon the heart inſenſibly, and every where produces a welcome emotion. The choice flowers of innocence and virtue, have expreſſions of taſte, not only in the finery of their foliage, but every fibre is full of ſignificance,

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and pregnant with ſome valuable quality. Religion, in her ſimple artleſs attire, though ſhe ſtoops not flaviſhly, nor conforms her mode to the faſhion of every fancy, is not on that account the leſs reſpectable. The homage of her friends is a tribute of unforced devotion, the prejudices of her foes make them repine at the ſight of her unuſual banner; but the umbrage ſhe cannot completely remove, ſhe in ſome meaſure, reduces to ſilence. Her aſpect is pleaſant and joyful, as the noon-day ſun; and the ſerenity of heaven ſmiles in her look. Her voice is full of harmony, with the breathings of humanity; ſhe enters not into private connection with the thunder-bolts of hoſtility, nor ever gives her ſanction to indecent feuds. Thus the proclamations of the Chriſtian ſcheme roll away our fears, like noiſy waves, to die before us on the ſhore of hope. Her face of love is no glimmering taper of uncertain ray, that points to paths of doubtful termination, or that leads to the lonely walk of deluſive ſuperſtition; but the bright effulgence of eternal ſplendour, durable and fair as its Almighty Author. To finiſh the

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deſcription, I ſhall quote the words of a polite, as well as a Chriſtian poet.

> Believe the muſe, the wintry blaſt of death,
> Kills not the buds of virtue; no they ſpread
> Beneath the heavenly beam of brighter ſuns,
> Through endleſs ages into higher powers!

Religion was preſcribed to the human ſpecies, as a neceſſary rule of duty, in the early dawn of creation, as well as to every ſucceeding age; and whatever part of ancient records we chuſe to glance over, we ſhall find, that in every climate or nation, where its generous influence was oppoſed, where its authority has been degraded, and its friendly viſits coldly admitted, rudely entertained, or forced to depart, cruelty and ignorance have immediately reared their ſerpentine heads, and barbariſm opened the way for an influx of ſavage manners, to occupy the deſerted ſtation of its heavenly form. But where the religion which is from above, pure and peaceable, lays open her beauty to the gazing eye, like a good picture executed with a maſterly hand, ſhe will diſplay her colours with a particular luſtre. To every individual, as well as to every community, ſhe adds a gracefulneſs

that

that is truly divine; for ſhe is the very ſinew of beauty and health. "Length of days "are in her right hand, and in her left, riches "and honour; her ways are ways of pleaſant-"neſs, and all her paths are peace." She is the parent of felicity, and the guardian of innocence. Proſperity and pleaſure look beſt in her dreſs, and adverſity derives its only conſolation from her refreſhing cordials. Her counſel is that of an angel; and the ſymphonious notes with which ſhe delights to entertain her principal favourites, are ſweeter than the muſic of paradiſe. The ſtructure of her felicity bends not before the blaſts which aſſail it; her radiant intellectual light baniſhes the gloom of terror, and elevates the mind with increaſing comfort, as we draw nigh the climate of eternal day. Our Saviour tells us, "that his yoke is eaſy, and that his "burden is light;" and religion is ſurely ſo, to thoſe who ſhall literally imbibe its ſpirit. To declaim againſt all innocent amuſement, bears a ſtronger ſcent of Phariſaical cant, than of Chriſtian moderation. It requires neither philoſophical diſquiſitions, nor acute reaſoning, to convince us, that the goſpel of the world will ſometimes

act with a ſeverity quite inconſiſtent with that Chriſtian charity which covers the ſacred oracles with conſummate beauty. Religion, as explained by our Saviour and his diſciples, conſiſts not in a diſtortion of countenance, in a cloud of ill-nature reſting on the brow; nor in ſecluſion from ſocial intercourſe, as if piety ſhould have exiſtence no where elſe, but in cells and cloiſters:—no ſuch ſacrifices are required by it; it only forbids guilty gratifications, or that licentious inclination which boldly ſets all laws, both human and divine, at defiance. To rational delight, religion can never be an enemy, for it is the honeſt good heart that has the beſt title to enjoy contentment; and to refuſe happineſs to the truly virtuous, and transfer it to the profane, would be equally irrational and unjuſt. The fooliſh flights of levity, or the dangerous excurſions of impiety, to which a violation of ſacred rites may eaſily waft its giddy votaries, are too often practiſed by the ſons of inconſideracy. Theſe graceleſs figures ſeldom ſpeak in the ſtyle of devotion. Their acquiſitions are not a collection of jewels, nor treaſures capable of purchaſing refinement of morals, or peace of mind,

mind. The perſons who deal deepeſt in artifice, aſſume frequently an air quite oppoſite to their eſtabliſhed habits. And as they know themſelves in ſome meaſure deſtitute of natural means, they attempt to ſupply the deficiency by counterfeit ones; and to accompliſh their purpoſes, they ſuit their language and manner as much to the character they affect as poſſible: For hypocriſy is a character which vice dares not avow; and a forced homage, which, however unwilling, it muſt pay to virtue, and which virtue, without diſpute, is entitled to obtain. A few may admire thoſe artful actors who can aſſume all the gay colours of the rainbow, with an equal facility; but integrity will ſecure eſteem, and be ſupported with ſucceſs, when the ſilly artifices of diſſimulation ſhall meet with merited contempt. Rich flowers communicate to their familiar aſſociates a fragrant and refreſhing flavour; in like manner, ſhe who wiſely diſcerns the beauties of divine improvement, will naturally ſtudy to acquire them; and will uniformly emit the grateful odour of a good example: for when once effectually initiated in virtue, the impreſſion will not only remain in

full force, but from day to day gain her reſpect, extend her conqueſts, and increaſe her intellectual beauty. Modeſty, truth, and virtue, in their unaffected robes, not only invite the eye of admiration, but make the perſon poſſeſſed of ſuch ſuperlative properties enjoy the ſerenity of heaven; refulgent beams of ſelf-approbation ever ſmile on the dome, diſtinguiſhed by ornaments ſo engaging; no foaming billows diſturb her joy, no riſing tempeſt clouds her proſpect, who is endued with diſcretion, and in whoſe breaſt moral beauties take up their abode. Be aſſured, ſays a ſenſible writer, that no character is more amiable, than that of a female; who, in the gay ſeaſon of life, and in the triumph of beauty, practiſes the known rules of ſelf-government, and whoſe correct taſte, and ſenſible manner, publiſh at once, that her religion is much more than an obſolete term, or a flaſhy oſtentation.

A light-houſe is a metaphor, (though ſomewhat coarſe), that conveys an idea of ſecurity; religion, in like manner, points to the deceiving banks, and treacherous rocks, which promiſe nothing but danger and ruin. Therefore it is

perfectly

perfectly requiſite to have a careful look-out, in the narrow channel, and on a lee-ſhore; for it is by eſcaping the riſk of theſe, and the boiſterous ocean, that landing is attended with ſuch ſingular degrees of happineſs.

The giddy and the thoughtleſs may behold the ſerene aſpect of religion, the unfaſhionableneſs of her manner, the circumſpection of her behaviour, with contempt or indifference; for the ſacrifices ſhe requires may ſeem difficult, and the reſtraints ſhe impoſes exceeding great: But if the beauties which compoſe the Chriſtian character be an object of choice, the duties it enjoins will appear neceſſary and reaſonable. Reſpect to its ſacred obligations, is greatneſs indeed; and in the conſtant and rational exerciſe of religion, good breeding, as well as ſound ſenſe, are exemplified, and beautify the character more eminently than robes of ſilk.

A judicious officer will ſeldom rank his beſt men in front, or expoſe them to the firſt onſet, but make choice of the moſt eminent for a *corps* of reſerve. The maſterly hiſtorian, the artful poet, and the ſkilful painter, cloſe their delineations with the fineſt colours, and make their

heroine, or hero, appear in the moſt engaging poſition, juſt at the finiſhing ſtroke.

Suppoſe the education of the young female now complete, the boarding tutoreſs giving her laſt benediction in the ſtyle of motherly affection, and the ripe information of years and experience, reſerving the ſtrength of her counſel to the concluding ſcene, it would perhaps conſiſt of ſentiments ſimilar to the following. "You have already experienced a ſufficient proof of parental regard, and how great a ſhare of their affection your happineſs has conſtantly engaged. Whatever appeared requiſite to advance your improvement, or contribute to your felicity, met with a willing and liberal ſupport. Obligations have been beſtowed with ſo much generoſity, that I perſuade myſelf, your gratitude will expreſs itſelf in every part of your future conduct, and effectually convince them, that you have been looking after ornaments of greater value than the fluctuations of faſhionable dreſs; and that their partiality, in reſpect to you, has not in one ſingle point been miſplaced." The gloſs that heightens the natural charms of modeſty, is effectually deſtroyed, when expoſed with eagerneſs

to

to every paſſing eye. Men always admire the cautious female, whoſe wiſdom ſeems to tell the ſtranger, I give you leave to gueſs who I am. A proper eſtimation of circumſtances, and of living manners, (the diſtinguiſhed feature of her who has had acceſs to company, and the benefit of a proper education), is not only health, and ſecurity to the ſoul, but tends to unfetter the mind from the confuſed clouds of illiberal prejudices, and in ſome meaſure to deſtroy the effect of ſelfiſh habits.

A female in the bloom of beauty, entering into the world, has the engaging proſpect of various enjoyments, preſſing forward to her view, and riſing around her in thick ſucceſſion. Her morning gay, her hopes alive, and her ſucceſs in life ſeemingly ſecure. No ſurly tempeſts appear; all is friendſhip and favour; and to ſalute her ſprightly form, happineſs from every avenue ruſhes forward in haſte. But the gloom of diſappointment ſometimes unexpectedly ſucceeds. The ſun of hope grows dim, and the tumult of the ocean is heard; though this ſhould not be the caſe, ſhe ſurely bids faireſt for happineſs, who looks with penetration into every

opening

opening event, and is always with caution preparing for a ſtorm. What has the fineſt female in poſſeſſion, that can authoriſe her to nurſe pride, or cheriſh vanity? Her body at the beſt is feeble, and every moment of life ſubject to diſeaſes and death. In her colour and complexion, in dreſs and elegance, the very flowers of the field outſhine her. In the fulleſt bloom of beauty, how eaſily and unexpectedly may a change be effected! The moſt engaging form, even from a few hours ſickneſs, may receive a very different aſpect.

"What is the blooming tincture of a ſkin,
To peace of mind and harmony within?
What the bright ſparkling of the fineſt eye,
To the ſoft ſoothing of a calm reply?
Can comelineſs of form, or ſhape, or air,
With comelineſs of words, or deeds compare?
No, thoſe at firſt, the unwary heart may gain,
But theſe, theſe only, can the heart retain."

A female of diſtinction and merit requires the application of the mental pick, as much as one who moves in a ſolitary unfrequented ſphere. The former, like a bright ſtar of conſiderable magnitude,

magnitude, dazzles with her intellectual accompliſhments, no leſs than by her external finery; and from the united efforts of theſe ſingular embelliſhments, her temptations are not more various, than her conqueſts are extenſive. Vanity may chance to inſinuate herſelf by the deceitful artifices of flattery; and by her ſoft enchantments, ſtrengthen the velocity of the paſſions, and provoke their appetite to the purſuit of enjoyments, ſometimes not eaſily attained; but to which the wing of fancy, or a vague wiſh, may frequently extend. The alluring marks of diſtinction which wealth and fame beſtow, raiſe admiration every where; and ſhe who ſhines moſt in theſe plumes, is thought the peculiar favourite of fortune; but ſolid judgement will penetrate through the diſguiſe, and diſcover that the greateſt flow of affluence does not continually chain happineſs to the gilded dome. She whoſe mind is much inflamed, or eſtimates her merit from the weight of her money, would find her intereſt promoted by juſt reflections on the various objects which claim ſo much of her reſpect. Let her calmly conſider, that her riches are but ſmall, when compared with thoſe of Cræſus;

and

and yet that the name of Solon alone could incite Cyrus to grant him a reprieve, which all his wealth was unable to purchaſe. She who feels impulſive elation from the highneſs of her birth, or the rank of her family, ought to annex to each of theſe articles, their natural ſignificance; and as theſe are diſtinctions not of her acquiring, a few ſerious reflections will eaſily rectify the diſorder, and expoſe the impropriety of attempting to eſtabliſh continued fame on ſuch infirm foundations. The female who can ſhew no merit, but what ſhe borrows from her parents or pedigree, is much obliged to her anceſtors, but can never expect the ſame degree of ſincere approbation.

A female of correct taſte would ſcorn to eſtimate her character by counterfeit ſigns of merit. She will join the Grecian exclamation, "It is diſhonourable for Sparta to fly, but noble to conquer."

She knows too well, that to flutter on the wings of her friend's reputation or fortune, would be to ſtipulate her own merit at a very low value; therefore, like a true chemiſt, ſhe endeavours

endeavours to make the proper uſe, without over-rating theſe advantages.

She analyzes the quality of complex materials, and philoſophically reduces their value to the primitive ſtandard. She will allow the world its riches, honours, and pleaſures, and with the niceſt diſcernment obſerves, that theſe have neither any fixed duration, nor wholly exempt their proprietors from trouble. In the circle of her own acquaintances, ſhe beholds beauty periſh in its bloom, ambition ſink in its triumph, and, from the public news, ſees every day freſh inſtances of riches deprived of their pride, and new graves opened for younger and older than herſelf. The language of theſe lectures is no feeble effort of eloquence; the truths repeated are ſtrong and important, and feelingly recommend the model on which the fair female ſhould form her conduct. The love of fame animates the exertions of thoſe who entertain high thoughts of the dignity of human nature; and when that ſpirit is once effectually imbibed, it will carry on the proſecution of its ſchemes, till they terminate either in pleaſing ſucceſs, or ſad diſappointment.

In

In the breaſt where prudence ſecures the priority of place, no compulſion is requiſite to enforce the benefit of propoſitions, which need no ſupport from ſtrength of argument, or depth of reaſoning; having truth for their foundation, and happineſs for the end at which they aim. The mental pick is ſo convenient an inſtrument, that it may eaſily be carried about, without the leaſt offence to either friends or foes: its regiſter is a kind of day-book, where accounts may be fairly ſtated; and a juſt computation of the ſmall ſums which are often neglected, and what they would amount to, if managed agreeable to the rules of œconomy, might no doubt prove ſerviceable. For characters of the firſt rate are not ſo perfect; but leſs or more improvement might be made. The female of correct taſte, has penetration ſufficient to reflect on the quality of virtue, and the various favours ſhe is capable of beſtowing. She perceives that her credit procures every where the ſalutation of reſpect; that her own conſequence is eſtabliſhed, in proportion to the relation in which ſhe ſtands to a connection ſo honourable; a connection, that not only reflects inimitable luſtre on her name and family,

family, but enables her, when ſhe retires from the gay crowd, to enjoy the ſerenity of ſolitude, and to peruſe the volume of her own heart without the bluſhes of remorſe. A valuable prize, in all ages and countries, has been thought a motive ſufficient to produce abundance of competitors: and what acquiſition can equal an unſullied reputation? a prize which can only be gained by the diligent improvement of moral beauties. She who has once effectually acquired the art of ſtanding in awe of herſelf, ſtands in no need of Seneca's imaginary tuition; for if ſhe is capable of knowing herſelf, ſhe will be capable of correcting her errors; and would rather fall from the Tarpeian rock, than from the altitude of diſcretion. A portrait of ſuch finiſhed features, is a model of beauty, and a living book of unqueſtionable merit. Modeſty in behaviour, as well as judgement in taſte, invite the contemplation of the judicious, to behold arrangement and painting of no fictitious decorations. A capacity to chuſe, and chuſe well, belongs only to the ingenious and diſcerning; it is indeed great ſkill to know what is truly beautiful. The ſagacious female, who is ſcientifically inclined, and

has learned to retire often within the ſanctuary of ſilence, and to meditate deliberately on her own intereſt, in every ſphere of life, will reap the rich increaſe of her wiſdom, and be adorned in a manner quite different from the artificial embelliſhments of pride and vanity. The beauties of piety and truth, treaſured up in the female breaſt, can ſcarcely be affected by any event, nor ſpoiled by the ravages of time. The rudeneſs of accidents may impair her health, or hurt her fortune; but can never injure her fame. She has got the key of beauty, as well as of happineſs, who loves virtue, and daily purſues the path of integrity. This is the ſource of improvement, from whence all that is good and lovely proceeds; and a mark of diſtinction, ſuperior to all the titles of dignity, that Rome, in her moſt flouriſhing ſtate, could either invent or confer. Beauty, a ſtranger to the artifices neceſſary to ſupport the influence, or preſerve the fame, of external elegance, reſembles the alluring ſign of ſome eminent merchant, which courteouſly invites the ſtranger to ſtep in to his ſhop, where he finds every thing within, correſponding to the outward appearance: were he deceived,

deceived, indeed, he would leave it as ſoon as he could with deeency, make the beſt of his way home, and baniſh all thoughts of a future viſit.

Feelings of a delicate nature can have no great pleaſure in aſſociating with thoſe of an oppoſite texture. Their manner, action, taſte, ſentiment, and language, have ſo much of a contrariety, that a ſincere or laſting agreement, or genuine happineſs, can ſcarcely be expected from a ſcene of ſuch motley inconſiſtencies. The female who is emulous to excel, who wiſhes to remain in poſſeſſion of herſelf, will never ſtoop to the artful ſtrains of vanity, nor greedily ſwallow the low deluſive language of flattery; which tends to endanger her diſcretion, and deprive her of other ſenſible enjoyments. For when once the heart and ear are engaged on the ſide of ſuch ſubtile deceivers, the diſpoſition will ſoon change its natural ſweetneſs, the imagination immediately ſwell, and be quite intoxicated with airy expectations. Not only ſhall mental improvement be ſtopt, and goodneſs of heart hindered to operate, the vail of modeſty ſhall be dropt, and colours aſſumed, flattering as thoſe of the

rainbow, but equally fluctuating. For ſhe who is ſo unhappy as to evade the counſels of wiſdom, and the ſalutary injunctions of religion, quits at once her connection with happineſs, friendſhip, merit, and a character with herſelf and the world. Whereas the cautious female not only ſucceſsfully overcomes temptations, but rejoices in the fruits of her victory: She ſelects with judgement the kind of arms proper to be uſed, and neceſſary to win the field. Her mind and her eyes are equally attentive to the deſtructive excurſions of profaneneſs, and the giddy flights of unhallowed levity: ſhe ſees what they are, and views them as enemies, with which ſhe is determined to enter into no terms of reconciliation; and whoever attempts to make their gilded bait ſweet to her taſte, ſhe conſiders as thoſe who have a deſign on her happineſs. The firſt pſalm is an elegant mirror for improvement; and by a ſubſtitution of the feminine gender, may admit of the following unlaboured comment. "Perfect happineſs awaits her, who in the counſel of the ungodly walketh not aſtray; who envyeth not the way of ſinners, nor delights to ſtand in their rank. The ſcorner's chair

chair ſhe will never occupy, nor laugh at thoſe who do: her character may be compared to a tree, planted by a river in a fertile ſoil, whoſe leaf ſhall never fade, but in due ſeaſon yieldeth abundance of rich fruit." While the ſmiles of proſperity continue to ſhine, and ſucceſsfully extend their flattering rays, then religion may poſſibly appear to diſadvantage; her breath may become languid, and her figure unengaging; and to get rid of her troubleſome importunity, means and meaſures are always ready at hand.

Cardinal Woolſey, prime miniſter to Henry the Eighth, by his own pitiful confeſſion, has left upon record an example of the woful conſequences of exchanging the important duties of devotion, for conſiderations of infinitely leſs value. How melancholy and affecting his exclamation, when approaching the verge of the grave, "Alas! alas!" ſaid he, "what a fall of fortune! had I been only half as faithful in the ſervice of my God, as I was in that of my king and country, I am perſuaded he would neither have neglected nor deſpiſed me, in my feeble declining days." But the ſympathetic feelings are relieved from the ſtruggle of commiſeration,

by reflecting on the manly piety of the following character. The Duke of Portland being ſomewhat late, it is ſaid, one morning in coming to the *levee*, King George the Second, with his courtiers around him, ſaluted him with a ſmile, as he ſtepped into the drawing-room, "There you come, ſmoking from your prayers." "I bluſh not at the obſervation, nor am in the leaſt aſhamed to own it. And I am confident, that your Majeſty will not think me the leſs loyal ſubject, for paying my reſpects, and bending my knee *firſt* to the King of kings." A heroic reply from a martial ſpirit; but however bright this example may appear, we have a much higher to contemplate. The Lord's Prayer is a model without its equal; every expreſſion is inimitably beautiful, and rich with inſtruction. It is an abridgement of the whole Chriſtian ſyſtem; its leſſons are plain and pious; it is the breath of benevolence, and the language of heaven. Theſe ſhort, but ſublime articles of faith, under which the extent of our duty is comprehended, can never be too much regarded. Serious and frequent peruſal of this finiſhed copy, with an intention to benefit by its healthy direction,

direction, has, in every ſtation and ſtage of life, a cloſe connection with happineſs. It not only enjoins equity, and the ſpirit of forgiveneſs and humanity, in our prevailing purſuits, but it is alſo like a guardian angel, or a perpetual *memento*, againſt the inſinuating arts of temptation.

Thus we may ſuppoſe the concluſion of her advice, not more ſincere, than ſtrongly impreſſed with the emphaſis of religion, and the energetic beauties of virtue. Having ſo far revealed her mind to her ward, and faithfully diſcharged her truſt, the governeſs allows her full liberty to purſue her journey home-wards, with the additional wiſh of much happineſs, and a joyful meeting with her family and friends. It may reaſonably be thought, that the particular attention paid to her education, in the different branches of uſeful knowledge, and the leſſons frequently preſcribed, for the regulation of her future conduct, have been ſo much to the purpoſe, that any further obſervations on the ſubject might be deemed either arrogant or unneceſſary.

But if I thought my perſevering in the mat-

ter would not be conſtrued into an offence, nor deſerve the epithet of idle words, I would proceed a little further; and if my ſtyle and mode of diſcuſſion ſhould not impart much information, I ſhall endeavour to ſupply the deficiency by the ſpirit of meekneſs. That a ſubject of this nature would require a greater degree of intimacy with the human heart, and a larger ſtock of experience and knowledge, than with decency I can claim, is a diſcovery which I ſtand in no need of being told; for I am already perfectly ſenſible of the ſecret. But as I am not out of conceit with female beauty, nor ever wiſh to be, the ſtandard of the virtuous character, I muſt own, is the banner of credit I ſhould wiſh if poſſible to reach. And though her cauſe ſhould not receive much juſtice from ſo unpoliſhed a pencil, I hope at leaſt it has been and will be my ſincere deſire, that whatever reſpect ſhe meets with, vice ſhall have none.

Whatever may be the ſtage on which we are to appear, a graceful introduction is a principal key to the ſpectator's affection, and tends greatly to overturn his prejudices againſt an accompliſhed actreſs. Great expectations are always

ways formed from the firſt appearance, and the more natural the exhibition, the pleaſure muſt be felt in proportion. The voice of applauſe always flows eaſy, when a compliment is ſupported with ſincerity, and is not the effect of forced complaiſance.

She who brightens like the noon-day ſun, and dazzles moſt when the ſcene ſeems darkeſt; who, in the ſtation ſhe occupies, diſorders no feature with ſhame or confuſion; who loſes not a particle of her merit, but ſteadily keeps it up, and continually gains as ſhe advances, has a fair and juſt title to the palm of honour. She may view it without a bluſh, and wear its encircling wreath upon her brow with conſcious approbation.

A juſt eſtimation of any character cannot be made by a ſingle glance, but in order to procure a correct opinion, various views are neceſſary; and if its beauties continue unclouded and equal, when obſerved in various poſitions, the reſult of the contemplation muſt lead to deſerved homage; eſpecially where natural uniformity, genuine taſte, and correct judgement, are found ſtrongly and often to co-operate.

Chriſtina,

Chriſtina, to the advantages of education and ſtrong ſenſe, adds a choice taſte, and a ſingular ſhare of modeſty. To models of refinement, ſhe is always attentive; and ſtudies to copy beauties ſeparated from rubbiſh, as much as poſſible: for imitation, without diſcerning ſome flower of elegance, is only carrying a taper, for expoſing folly more clearly to notice. To perſonate a character, or adopt a part where the features are all counterfeited, and different from the original, is a diſguiſe that ſoon betrays the imperfect actor it would artfully conceal. If elegant language, poliſhed periods, and an affable manner, ſhould captivate or engage one's taſte, when covered with a maſk; the charms which theſe create will rather augment than hinder the expoſure of a correſponding beauty; and if any ſhould think it convenient to aſſume the ſhadow of any virtue, the poſſeſſion of its reality muſt be much more deſirable; for it inſpires equanimity of mind, and excludes that ſort of tremour, or fear of detection, which is the inſeparable attendant of impoſition.

Whatever is natural in itſelf gains no advantage from dark wavering clouds, unleſs it be

be in the compariſon, where the inferiority of the one makes the brightneſs of the other more conſpicuous. The gracefulneſs that will always pleaſe, never drags any of the tawdry performances of diſtempered fancy to the face of light; for its inherent influence, conſiſts in uniform wealth of mind, and ſtanding habits of virtue, brought forth in the nurſery of ingenious diſcernment, and reared to maturity by a ſincere and continued connection with the ſpirit of moral and divine improvement. The plain honeſt colours of integrity, without any varniſh or artificial aid, have a beauty quite correct, altogether ſuperior to the paltry trappings of diſſimulation. She who expects to enjoy the refined entertainment, that forms no connection with future anxiety, will find her intereſt in making the ſphere of her innocence as ſecure as poſſible; for the accompliſhments of an angel cannot be acquired, without particular attention to the duties which compoſe the character. The manner of the politician may have its admirers, and be thought the effect of knowledge and experience, notwithſtanding of the character to which ſome annex it. Chriſtina's converſation,

verſation, in the principal parts of ſpeech, is, like her geſtures, quite natural, and richly coloured with mental beauties: Therefore ſhe will never ſacrifice the honourable accents of truth, to the pliable ſtyle of fineſſe; nor ſeem deſirous to pleaſe her companions, by quitting the character of integrity. She has beauties peculiar to herſelf; but her peculiarity is not ſo much obſerved in the order of her dreſs, as in the improvement of her mind. She has penetration ſufficient to remark the advantages to be derived from reading, and the entertainment which uſeful books impart. She keeps her eyes open to behold her own actions; and effectually perceives, that no book requires more frequent peruſal, than the volume of her own life, and the picture which her prevailing actions exhibits. She is never averſe to ſelf inſpection: her own heart is frequently examined, and with its various emotions ſhe is well acquainted.

Every performance noted for its value, ſhe treats with ſilent reſpect; and whatever is otherwiſe, ſhe is not only anxious to remove, but to have the vacancy filled with ſome choice ſubſtitute. Thus, from a conſtant repetition of improvements,

provements, ſo conducive to happineſs, ſhe is in a fair way of accumulating more than a common ſtock of intellectual riches, and of giving her pleaſures a more poignant zeſt, than the languid enjoyments of the miſer, or the groſs entertainments of the prodigal.

That a good heart, and the breathings of humanity, are firſt-rate ornaments, which claim every where the throne of affection, and embelliſh handſomely the ſtation which they occupy, are diſcoveries which Chriſtina will readily admit; for to meditation and inſpection ſhe is no ſtranger.

But the manner or foibles of her acquaintances, are not the materials which compoſe the train of her amuſements, or form the chief ſubjects of her ſtudy.

Attentively ſhe reflects on her own character, as ſhe ſtands connected with ſociety, and the public view to which ſhe is expoſed. She knows the nature of the part in which ſhe is engaged, is ſerious and important; and examines the power of the cauſes, as well as the progreſs of every effect, with nice diſcerning, and impartial criticiſm. She is not in the leaſt backward in

her inquiry, as to the figure ſhe herſelf makes in the preſent ſphere of exiſtence; nor as to the character with which ſhe appears in the regiſter of heaven, or the colour that her name and actions will deſerve and bear, in the opinion of ſucceeding ages. A building erected with plain materials, of a ſolid ſubſtance, regularly conducted, and cloſely cemented, is always leſs chargeable, than the unſettled, inſufficient, ill-conſtructed edifice: for the fabric that is founded on a rock, and bears in every corner the character of connection and ſtrength, requires no ſecurity or out-works for its ſupport. Thus Chriſtina trembles for no eye; her hand holds out no bribe to the witneſſes of her folly; ſhe claims no patch of concealment for any part of her character; for irregularity never forces the intrenchments of her virtue and honour. Her laurels are not like the ſpoil of conquerors, purchaſed at the expence of planting miſery in the corner from which they had been violently ſnatched; but the brightneſs of innocence, and the trophies of deſerved fame; the texture is extraordinary, and the quality durable: like Aaron's rod, if I may be allowed the compari-

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ſon, producing unfading bloſſoms, and fruit fully ripe, rich to the taſte, and pleaſing to the eye. In other articles, as well as thoſe already mentioned, ſenſibility and decency will in a great meaſure regulate her taſte. She will eaſily learn from the practice of inventors, or thoſe who have a novelty in their manner; who, like the poſt-boy, carry a budget of news continually about with them; and deal out their fuſtian ſtuff, either wholeſale or retail, as occaſion may ſerve. But although prating and defamation are leſs or more the weeds of every ſoil, and the misfortune to which the beſt of characters are very often expoſed, Chriſtina is ſo far from joining in their rude vociferation, that ſhe pauſes for recollection, and finds that ſhe has defects of her own, which, though ſhe does not treat with the partiality of favourites, effectually repreſs her propenſity to ſlander.

Thus, while ſhe is conſcious of inability in herſelf to reach conſpicuous virtue, ſhe ſincerely ſympathiſes with others engaged in a ſimilar ſtruggle. She knows that detraction, in every age, has had religion and philoſophy for its enemies: And as it is by no means the man-

ner by which merit is made viſible, ſhe is ſure to purchaſe no part of her amuſement at ſuch a price. She is quite ſenſible, that when a perſon has once found the way of being well employed at home, the difficulty of reſiſting the ſpirit, which aims at croping the reputation of others, or which ſeems to delight in illiberal reflections, will gradually leſſen, and at length evaniſh.

Detractors are tutors who will inſtruct their pupils *gratis*, and often in ſecrets which they ought to conceal. When the inquiſition of malice begins to operate, a cloud of imaginary foibles are eaſily invented; but a ſenſible female will never feed the flame of ill nature. The rage of prejudice, ſhe will ſtrive to conquer, as diſcretion may dictate. The garb of hoſtility, and the thunder-bolts of revenge, ſhe never meets in a ſimilar form; but counteracts their influence by the ſpirit of mildneſs, and the ſmiles of civility. The odious vice of detraction is thus ſenſibly expoſed by a finiſhed pencil. "When the colours of calumny are once unfurled, volunteers flock to her ſtandard, multitudes form her camp, for want of better employment;

ployment; and flying ſquadrons are diſperſed every where, ſo well pleaſed with the opportunity of miſchief and pillage, that they toil without proſpect of treaſure, without hope of profit. But whatever may be the motive of their conduct, it is beſt to overlook it: for folly ſcarcely can deſerve reſentment, and malice is puniſhed by neglect." If veracity was always to meet with indulgence agreeable to its quality, duplicity would never be in vogue; it would juſtly be conſidered as rubbiſh, of which common ſenſe ſhould be aſhamed; and a meanneſs quite unworthy of entertainment. The language of truth is ſafe and graceful; the bluſhes of confuſion, and the colouring of ſhame, are at no time the effect of its grateful accents. It changes not with circumſtances, nor does it grow decriped with age. In ſhort, it is the eſſence of all beauty, and the beſt letter of recommendation, that any can carry in their company. A diſcourſe or converſation, darkly clouded with the counterfeit of truth, or the acrimonious remarks of the ſatiriſt, as the choſen figures of rhetoric,—effectually baniſhes the enjoyment of pleaſure, and the quality of beauty. Decency in manner or

expreſſion, ſhows refinement of ſentiment, and a delicacy of thought, happily ſeaſoned with the advantages of acute diſcerning. Injurious liberties, in either language or practice, diſcovers a barbarous mind, and betrays great want of taſte.

Chriſtina's perceptions are always deeply tinctured with the beauties of truth; into whoſe place ſhe will admit no ſubſtitute, however fair or flattering. And thoſe deſtitute of ſuch qualities, are none of her favourites, and but ſeldom ſharers in her amuſements: before ſhe fixes her friend or acquaintance, ſhe takes notice of their deportment, looks to the natural conſtruction of their character, and in matters of ſuch importance to her happineſs, truſts no eyes but her own. In her retroſpect of paſt events, ſhe finds names upon record, that will be tranſmitted to future ages, with thoſe ſtains of reproach which adhere only to the worſt of characters, to thoſe who wound under fair profeſſions of affection; but when perſons of this deſcription appear, ſhe wiſely views their deceitful countenance, as a dangerous coaſt ſhe is not to approach. When ſhe receives money, ſhe ſen-

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ſibly proves its quality, for ſhe knows, in caſe ſhe does not challenge the impoſition in its ſeaſon, ſhe may chance to ſuffer for her credulity. Her friend ſhe will view with equal preciſion; and as Euripides ſays of truth, that it loves plain language, affection, in like manner, ſhould be ſincere and genuine, without any connection with the variegated colours of cloudy diſſemblance.

As ſhe is cautious in the choice of her friend, ſhe is alſo compoſed in her devotion, ſerious and punctual in her duty to her Maker. Reſpect to whatever is ſacred, is her Sunday and daily diſpoſition. She modeſtly attends the temple of her God; and her intention in appearing there, is not ſo mean a motive as popular applauſe, or the outward colour of religion; her decent manner and ſober gait, which are neither borrowed nor artificial, will expreſs ſomething more amiable. She obſerves a line of conduct quite different from that which prevails at a ball, a theatre, or any other ſcene of amuſement, where falſe pleaſure ſparkles in every eye, and a conſtant ſucceſſion of compliments are every where exchanged. Her opi-

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nion is not ſolely ſupported from its being the practice of the country where ſhe reſides; nor does it ariſe from the vain fancy of being noticed for the elegance, or peculiar quality of her dreſs. Theſe are not her ruling cauſes of repairing to the houſe of devotion. The ſolemnity of her manner will repeat her buſineſs, and the impreſſion ſhe entertains will merit all due reſpect. She piouſly conſiders it as a place conſecrated to the worſhip of her God, venerable from age, and calculated to influence her mind with a dutiful ſenſe of the obligations ſhe is under, and which ſhe thinks herſelf bound to recogniſe. She not only ſtudies to maintain a ſerious frame, ſuited to the external rites ſhe countenances, but alſo a modification of manner, ſufficient to overawe the wandering ſallies of fancy, with this ſeaſonable reflection, that the incenſe offered by the lips is altogether unprofitable, and an inſult to the Deity, unleſs the heart ſincerely joins in the ſacred ſervice. If the compoſition has taſte enough to merit approbation, ſhe will not churliſhly with-hold her tribute of praiſe: If otherwiſe, her practice will indicate more of the Chriſtian, than to join with the ill-natured

in their illiberal ſarcaſms. Theſe are ſome of the beauties of Chriſtina's character.

To do as we wiſh to be done by, our Saviour makes the principal point on which the authority of the law and the prophets was wholly eſtabliſhed. Univerſities are not the only places to which we ſhould repair, with a view to learn the obligations of virtue. The incloſures of erudition are not the infallible ſanctuary we are to explore for a deciſion, correſponding to the logical deſcriptions we may hear of moral duties. The lectures of the philoſopher, in the glowing colours of his expreſſive delineation, may pleaſe the taſte, and charm the ear: his choice inſtructions may be continually ſeaſoned with uncommon figures of rhetoric, ſtrength of reaſoning, elegance of language, and harmony of periods. Such ſubjects, no doubt, even in rehearſal or ſpeculation, are both edifying and entertaining: yet it is the practice alone that claims the greateſt ſhare of approbation, and effectually determines the character.

Ordinary capacities can eaſily diſtinguiſh beauty from deformity; no depth of penetration is required to mark the natural features of each.

Virtue

Virtue and vice have ever been at variance; and no argument has yet been found powerful enough to produce a reconciliation. Where the mandates of divine truth are oppoſed, and propriety of morals laid aſide, or careleſsly overleaped, there lawleſs appetites are ſure to riſe and rage: and when that is the caſe, the fate of virtue may eaſily be figured; for whoever purchaſes illicit gratifications at the expence of duty and diſcretion, is ſure to over-rate his enjoyments. But the progreſs of virtue is always ſteady, and free from the tumult of paſſion or confuſion; therefore, in order to ſecure felicity, meaſures antecedent or in alliance with happineſs, muſt be uniformly adopted.

A ſailor, who had been fortunate enough to find in his wife a moſt amiable companion; but not being able to make a proper eſtimation of his valuable prize, he neglected to pay her that tribute of reſpect, which is due to merit of the firſt quality. Like too many of the preſent age, he took a thought of acting the faſhionable gentleman, by keeping a courtezan, or concubine. To expoſtulate with him upon the impropriety of his conduct, was but a vain attempt; for he

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was too far gone in the diſeaſe called folly, to recover all on a ſudden. When juſt ready to ſail, deluſion had ſo far repreſſed the generous feelings of affection, that a preference was given to the dulcinea, by waiting firſt upon her to receive her commiſſion; which was extravagant enough. The poor wife was conſidered but as a trifling piece of furniture, ſcarce worth noticing: however, in taking his leave, by way of irony, he aſked, if ſhe had any particular demands? ſhe modeſtly made him a reply, which I fancy he did not expect, viz. that ſhe would be quite happy, and perfectly pleaſed, if he only brought her home a ſhilling's worth of wiſdom. After reaching the place of his deſtination, being ſucceſsful in his voyage, and on the point of returning home,—to the injunctions of the proſtitute he attended minutely; and the article wanted by his wife was ſo low priced, that he thought it ſhould alſo be ſought for: And accordingly inquired at the firſt convenient ſhop, if they had any wiſdom to ſell. But ſurpriſed at the ſtrange queſtion, he was kept in exerciſe, and directed from one ſhop to another, till he reached the laſt, which joined the quay; he entered it, with

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aſking, as uſual, if they ſold a piece of finery, called Wiſdom.

The merchant being a man of more than ordinary ingenuity, at once underſtood him, replied in the affirmative, and wiſhed to know how much he wanted. But before I ſatisfy you in that ſingular demand, ſays he, permit me to aſk you a few queſtions, and I hope you will anſwer them with candour: Who deſired you to purchaſe this ſame wiſdom? My wife. That tells me you are a bad boy, and that you do not treat her with that humanity, or generous attachment, that nuptial engagements would require, and that an honeſt heart, which has a ſincere deſire to live in harmony and happineſs, has a juſt title to expect. I fear ſome baſe enchantreſs captivates your affection, and makes you neglect your wife. After awakening his ſurpriſe by a ſuggeſtion ſo unexpected, he honeſtly acknowledged the authenticity of his diſcovery.

I hope you will not be offended, then, though I ſhould deliver my ſentiments upon this ſubject with ſome degree of freedom. When a man or woman create miſery to themſelves, they ought, and do often, pay for their folly. No vice will

loſe

loſe its influence, till its deformity appears ſufficiently plain, to make us view it with averſion. Delicacy of conduct ſuitable to the character of a man, and a Chriſtian, that will triumph over whatever is hollow or unſound, is neceſſary to be obſerved in an union which requires the exerciſe of prudence, and permanency of affection. Treachery in marriage is a baſe merchandize, that receives no ſanction of approbation from being ſo common in the world.

Thoſe who break through the ſacred reſtraint, not only impoſe upon others, but alſo deceive themſelves. And while the ſubſtance of happineſs flies much faſter than their fancy can purſue, like the roving cloud of a ſtorm, there remaineth ſcarcely any ſhadow of comfort. You are now going home; as ſoon as you get ſnug into the harbour, land in your moſt ſhabby dreſs; wait firſt on this ſame favourite, make up a pitiful ſtory of your loſſes and misfortunes, you will then ſee what reception you meet with. Repair next to your wife, tell her the ſame ſtory, and you will effectually diſcern, which of the two has the beſt claim to your

affection: for thoſe who ceaſe to love virtue, every good man ſhould ceaſe to know.

He then took his leave, politely thanked him for his wiſdom, and aſſured him he would cloſely adhere to his injunctions. The very day he reached his native ſhore, he forgot not to approach his miſtreſs in the manner preſcribed. His tattered dreſs, or indigent appearance, was no great entertainment to her eyes; the diſmal relation of his misfortunes, to her ears had no muſic. In ſhort, inſtead of expreſſing the leaſt feeling of ſympathy for him, ſhe immediately aſſumed her natural aſſurance, and bluntly told him, ſhe was amazed how he had the impudence to come near her houſe; and charged him to ſhew her his face no more. He recovered at once from his former frenzy, and gave her to underſtand, that he was certain her counſel would produce the deſired effect, and that he was fully determined never to pay her another viſit. Then to his own habitation he haſtily directed his willing ſteps. His wife received him with a ſmiling countenance, and a hearty welcome: before he had got half-way in his gloomy narration, with the ſwelling tear

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in her eye, ſhe kindly interrupted him; and aſſured him, that it was not his money, but his heart, ſhe was anxious to ſecure. Though ſhe had no deſign to mix reproachful looks or language with her breathings of rejoicing; yet ſhe would make no ſecret of her deſire, nor attempt to conceal her wiſh of fixing his affection. And if in that point ſhe could only be ſucceſsful, ſhe would envy no one's happineſs. The merchant's wiſdom loſt nothing of its value from importation. His heart was ſenſibly touched with gratitude to the one for his valuable inſtruction; and with a glow of affection to the other, for her unmerited attachment, which for ſome moments could only be expreſſed in the ſilent language of admiration. He then candidly revealed the whole of the enigma, and from that day ſeriouſly improved every opportunity of advancing her happineſs: nor would he ever allow any other woman to ſhare in his heart, or divide his love. Therefore I ſhall leave them in full poſſeſſion of happineſs, and proceed to contemplate another picture.

Inconſtancy always ranges without any ſettled object of deſire; therefore, to ſubdue this airy

ſpirit of novelty effectually, or change a taſte once accuſtomed to variety, is a taſk not eaſily performed. Perſons bred in the ſhades of retirement, inſtead of wandering among the meteors of faſhion, which dazzle the world by their elegance and novelty, would do well to conſult common ſenſe: for to think of combining oppoſite qualities, or form a coalition between diſpoſitions, againſt which nature and habit have declared perpetual enmity, is at once abſurd and impracticable. A writer of eminence is of opinion, "That it would not be very difficult to find a ſuitable companion, if every man was content with ſuch as he is qualified to expect; but if vanity tempts him to forſake his rank, and poſt himſelf among thoſe with whom no common intereſt or mutual pleaſure can ever unite him, he muſt always live in a ſtate of unſocial ſeparation, without tenderneſs, and without truſt."

Wherever an extravagant diſparity of ſituations or education takes place, gratification, though poſſible to be obtained, perhaps in ſome particular caſes, it would neither be ſafe nor prudent to wiſh for, upon terms ſo unequal. When happineſs perches itſelf on an elevation

difficult

difficult to reach, and where all ſeeming freedom is ſacrificed in the acquiſition, it would not be amiſs to make a fair calculation, early and impartially, to view the object of purſuit, with her mental and perſonal advantages, and to ſee if her qualities are ſufficient to make a full compenſation for the anxiety they excite. The fable, where the father ſent his ſon to the wood, with inſtructions, the firſt day to cut as high as his hand could reach, might dictate a leſſon of wiſdom, if wiſdom could be caught from example. When the taſk of the day was over, with the tender feelings of ſympathy, the father condoled with him, as if he himſelf had ſhared in the fatigue; ſo much indeed, that the young man was aſhamed to complain, although the effect of his toil was ſpeaking aloud, from every vein and ſinew in his body. The next day's injunctions, as much upon the other extreme, were, to cut as cloſe to the ground as poſſible. When at night he came home, attention and concern were ripe for utterance, and the effuſions of benevolence were no leſs expreſſive, than on the preceding evening. The third and laſt day, no arbitrary meaſures were preſcribed: The parent relieved

him from a taſk which he had hitherto perform-ed with inconvenience and reluctance: A diſpen-ſation was granted him, to take his mark oppo-ſite to himſelf, without any particular order in his operation. Finiſhing his taſk with a good grace, he ſaunters home with the ſong of triumph; the father, however, ſeemed to take no notice of his cheerfulneſs, but began to ſoothe him, as formerly, with the ſalutation of tender-neſs. Father, he replies, your particular con-cern claims my gratitude at all times; but I think it at this moment unneceſſary, for the labour of this day looked more like play than toil. My ſon, pauſe and reflect on what you felt and ſaw, hearken not to me alone, but rather to the voice of experience and wiſdom; for honour and advantage, reſult from their pre-cepts.

Permit me to mention Miſs Lofty. Had a gra-tification of your taſte taken place, when much againſt my pleaſure, your addreſſes were direct-ed to her; had you even reached the pinnacle to which your views aſpired, perhaps you would have found a gueſt altogether different, and ſomething quite foreign from the happineſs

you

you had in expectation. You flew again to Miſs Unfragrant: She, with equal arrogance, might have given you the ſauce of repentance, or probably perpetual bondage would have been the chains aſſigned you for life. The laſt day you was pleaſed and happy, and ſeemed a perfect maſter of your buſineſs; read from that plain lecture, the part which you yourſelf ought to act. Make choice of the female whoſe education, taſte, feelings, devotion, and behaviour, flow in a regular courſe; with whom you think happineſs is in the greateſt credit: for true taſte, like Narciſſus, is ſtrongly taken with its own likeneſs. Lord Darnly, from his elegant appearance, rather than his merit, was raiſed to a rank far above what he had a right to aſpire; the duties of which he was incapable of diſcharging, either with advantage to the kingdom, or honour to himſelf. The unfortunate, but accompliſhed Queen Mary, found to her coſt, when it was too late to complain, and when the fallies of love, inſpired by the impoſition of external beauty, had loſt their power to pleaſe, what ill-ſkilled meſſengers her eyes had been, and the unfair report they had haſtily made of

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him with whom ſhe was to lead her life; for to this unequal choice all her ſubſequent misfortunes might, with ſtrong preſumption, be aſcribed.

A volume elegantly bound, if it contains little information, neither ſentiment, language, nor a ſupport of virtue, its external finery will ſoon ceaſe to pleaſe, and its fair poliſhed appearance, which at firſt excited commendation, will completely loſe its credit, and ſuddenly fall into diſrepute. Another, though not bound at all, if it contains the marks of genuine refinement; if every expreſſion you peruſe, and every page you open, ſeem pregnant with the riches of merit,—you are glad to ſnatch—from the jaws of obſcurity, the remains of ſo much beauty, and to preſerve it, though in a ſhabby outward appearance, from the fate of abuſe or decay.

The picture of marriage deſcribed by a lively imagination, or the gay colours of the Poet, perhaps in romantic ſcenery, may have more of the fiction of a fable, than a delineation of the real ſtate; where all foreign deception ſhould be viewed with an eye of jealouſy, treated as an enemy to which no ſtation of credit ſhould

be

be aſſigned. Many are ready to annex an idea of finiſhed felicity to matrimonial connection,—conſider it as the ſerenity of a perpetual ſun-ſhine, where no tempeſtuous paſſion riſes to ruffle the mind; but a ſenſible female will ſhow her juſt opinion of the buſineſs, by the ſolidity of her reflections. She often conſults the productions of nature, for leſſons of inſtruction. She ſees the juvenile flower of the ſpring, that makes ſo fair a ſhew, and emits ſuch a pleaſant flavour, ſoon ſtript of all its gaudy colours, and its ſtately pride blaſted in full blow. From pointing to a figure ſo tranſient in its nature, a diſcouraging diſcuſſion is not in the leaſt intended. Though it is too true, that many unhappy examples are recorded in every age, and ſeen in every country, notwithſtanding of this, the ſacred engagement ſhould meet with no abuſe from ſuch an argument. When the torch of affection which leads the party contracted to the bower of hymen, and glows with mutual ſincerity; when it is before hand underſtood, as a connection where happineſs cannot be continued, without a particular deſire to render life agreeable to each other,—the meaning, which never forfeits its natural

beauty

beauty or ſenſe, has ſhared in the relation. And from a countenance ſo fair, delight, in its principal quality, may reaſonably be expected. When the prevailing taſte or hopes of happineſs, ſpring from the vain ideas of equipage and grandeur, and not from the good qualities of the character propoſed, it is eaſy to imagine what may be the conſequence of meaſures ſo irregular and ill digeſted. It is not in the palaces of eaſtern monarchs, that love without diſſimulation has its ſeat of fame, or planet of dignity. The mechanic of Indoſtan may happily experience that periodical and ſincere ſatisfaction, from the partner of his affection, which the ſovereign of a great nation, in the variety of his enjoyments, and the confuſion of his ſeraglio, labours in vain to acquire. Sincerity and candour are the elements where virtue loves to dwell, and happineſs to ſmile: and where theſe valuable companions are pleaſed to reſide, they are ſure to procure and continue affection, much longer than wealth, grandeur, or Graham's cœleſtial bed. The Spectator is of opinion, that ſincerity and virtue are the firſt articles to be conſulted; that where theſe fail on either ſide,

enjoyment

enjoyment is ſeldom at home, and felicity at the beſt but a fluctuating gueſt. Challenges of ſuperiority are laid aſide, where real affection is underſtood. Love is more than a ſkilful mathematician; for he will eaſily reconcile the lines of difference, and make them every where run parallel. Thoſe who unite with a determined reſolution of affection, of increaſing their ſtock, by ſharing the pleaſure or intereſt of it equally with each other, will in a ſhort time obtain that accumulation of tenderneſs, which prevails only in the ſoil where goodneſs regulates the paſſions. To the very ſilence of thoſe we love, we generouſly aſcribe ineffable charms: and the language of thoſe we diſlike, has a flaw in every expreſſion; all their periods ſeem rude and unedifying. When a profeſſion of eſteem is fraught with tenderneſs, all the tranſactions of the day are conducted with good humour, and continued with frequent and ſerious inſtances of a happy underſtanding. Where diſaffection ſpeaks no tone of victory; where all its emotions are ſuppreſſed, before they ſwell into a ſtubborn diſeaſe, or habits of unhappy conſequence,—pleaſure and affection are then confined to their proper bounds.

For

For without the art of reaſoning, it appears as a plain fact, that if diſguſt once riſes into rage, or violence, you may then look for the departure of peace, and hear her expiring voice pronounce a mournful farewell to the pleaſures of affection. Ah! what a diſmal ſcene! how dark and cloudy the proſpect! every trivial circumſtance will carry the conſtruction of a crime, and even what is innocent in itſelf, to the eye of diſtruſt has no beauty: comforts ſicken into a ſolitary ſadneſs, or a raging ſtorm; and in the ſpleen of diſcontent, diſcretion is effectually loſt. Therefore, to make the ſinews of affection durable, marriage requires that a ſimilar taſte and affection form every part of the agreement, and continue to increaſe in their progreſs through the whole length of the relation. Thoſe choice characters, whoſe minds are richly tinctured with ſenſibility, can never be at any great diſtance from happineſs. While the brightening beams of day ſmile on their ſteps, and join in their company; when the ſentiments and purſuits of this ſtate are not feigned teſtimonies, but the ſolid and genuine ſupport of mutual endearment, pleaſure then is ſomething more

than

than an idle chimera, it is that glow of enthuſiaſm that elevates the generous votaries to the firſt degree of rational delight. Therefore it would be as great a wonder, to meet with clouds of confuſion in ſuch a ſerene climate, as it would to find diamonds in the barren hills of Tenneriff. Before a marriage receives its date, ſhould the voice of correct underſtanding make any inquiries, what may we ſuppoſe the qualifications that are moſtly thought of, or conſidered as neceſſary to excite attention, and ſecure eſteem? The queſtion might not be ſo much framed to accord with the general practice, as with the periods of a correct taſte, and ſage penetration. Is ſhe very beautiful? has ſhe many courtiers? and what is her fortune? are not the principal inquiries which ſhould be made, or with which a laſting proſpect of felicity is natively connected. It is not ſhe who follows ſlaviſhly the caprice of faſhion, who is ready to vary her taſte, to ſuit the complexion of the times, from whom the pleaſures of contentment, or of domeſtic enjoyments, may be expected. If much information and learning, in the eſtimation of ſome men, are not the qualities requiſite to en-

courage happineſs, or form a pleaſant female companion, I ſhould think that ignorance could never make her more agreeable, nor more fit for a partner in life. The ſong of the Iſraelitiſh women, that Saul had killed but one thouſand, and David ten, is a plain proof, that, when a languid performance meets with a feeble encomium, meritorious actions ought to ſhine.

The principal beauties that common ſenſe ſhould eſteem, and for which it ſhould make its demand, is a ſenſible, feeling, and affectionate heart; a comely, modeſt, and agreeable behaviour. Does religion inſpire a young woman with that Chriſtian charity, that will make her remain paſſive or ſilent, and indicate no marks of raſh judgement or ſeverity, even when ſhe cannot approve? Is it more from reality than ſhew, that the witneſſes of her piety ſpeak plain and aloud? Theſe are refined qualifications; and if theſe are the friendly inſtructions to be learned from her, happy, for ever happy, is he who ſhall obtain her. He receives not all her portion at one payment; neither is it a yearly income; but, what is ſtill better, a conſtant and daily revenue. It is only where the joys of

freedom

freedom ſhed their generous influence, that courtſhip is an act of inclination, or the effect of choice. During the force of the feudal ſyſtem, when the laws of chivalry were in vogue, ruffians or barbarians were often the moſt ſucceſsful in female conqueſts; but as ſociety began to improve, and fighting became leſs faſhionable, the ridiculous exhibitions of a Don Quixotte began gradually to decline. Nothing can be more reaſonable, than that love ſhould direct in the choice of a partner for life; and that the parties contracted in wedlock ſhould enter into that compact with the moſt genuine affection for each other. "Love," ſays an eminent philoſopher, "is a ſtrong preſervative againſt the infection of looſe example: it helps to ſubdue all foreign oppoſition in the way of refinement, and gives a neceſſary ſupply to the fineſt virtues." To ſtrengthen the foregoing aſſertion, I ſhall relate an oral narration, where a ſudden revolution of ſentiments wrought wonders in a very ſhort time. A recruiting officer, who, with his party, had been billeted in a certain town; the firſt night he was ſo much engaged, that it was ſomewhat late before he could make it convenient to go

home to his lodging; and in that caſe had not an opportunity of ſeeing many of the family. One of the daughters, with her companion, had their room cloſe to the one in which he lay. After her firſt ſleep, recollecting ſhe had forgot to give the ſervants ſome inſtructions neceſſary to be executed before morning, ſhe roſe for that purpoſe, and ſoon diſcharged the buſineſs; but in her way backward, by miſtake, went to the captain's apartment, in place of her own. She lay by him for ſome time, without the leaſt ſuſpicion of having changed her companion; but happening to reach her hand over his breaſt, ſhe diſcovered her error, and, as much afraid as ſhe was ſurpriſed, immediately leapt out of bed; but he awakening, was equally alert, and in a moment ſecurely locked her in his arms. Finding he was determined not to part with her eaſily, ſhe addreſſed him with the utmoſt civility. My good Sir, I preſume, from your profeſſion, that you are a man of honour, and would not wiſh to expoſe a miſtaken female to unmerited ridicule. I am under a contract of marriage, and my fate is to be decided by twelve to-morrow: Therefore, in caſe you do not deſiſt, I ſhall certainly

tainly alarm the whole family. Well, ſays he, ſince ſuch is the caſe, I ſhall comply with your requeſt, on condition that you promiſe to make me your beſt man. She at once agreed to the propoſal, obtained her liberty, and concealed her danger.

In the morning, upon his being introduced to the bride, ſhe effectually ſhook his military bravery. Mr Love, that cunning engineer, immediately brought all his artillery to play, and laid a cloſe ſiege to his heart. He was altogether charmed with her appearance, and her great good ſenſe was equally captivating. He ſaw that no time was to be loſt; therefore, like a ſkilful artificer, began his counter work, and conſidered all advantages as fair. The clergyman, when the party appeared, ſuppoſed all objections removed, and was proceeding to unite them, when the officer thus addreſſed her intended huſband: You may think yourſelf at liberty to marry her, but I declare upon honour ſhe was in bed with me laſt night. She bluſhed from ear to ear, and the whole family was in confuſion. The bridegroom, without any inquiry into this myſterious buſineſs, takes his hat, and

ſwears ſhe ſhould never bed with him. Having been ſo far fortunate in getting rid of the chief metropolitan, he ſteps forward with theſe words: If my hand can be any compenſation for what you have loſt, it is quite ready for your reception. After a ſerious converſation on the ſubject, giving a minute detail of all the circumſtances, and the cauſe that gave riſe to his declaration, ſhe learned the beauties of his character, accepted of his offer, and with mutual conſent, they were inſtantly united. The ſenſible thoughts of the comedian are, in this ſingular caſe, ſomewhat applicable: "O marriage! happieſt, eaſieſt, ſafeſt ſtate; let debauchees and drunkards, ſcorn thy rights, how can the ſavage call it loſs of freedom, thus to converſe with, thus to gaze at, a faithful, beauteous friend: Bluſh not, my fair one, that my love applauds thee; nor be it painful to be my wedded wife, that my full heart o'erflows in praiſe of thee. Thou art by law, by intereſt, and by paſſion mine: Paſſion and reaſon join in love of thee." And I take it for granted, that they lived quite happy, as I never heard the leaſt rumour tranſpire to the contrary.

To

To ſpeak in the ſtyle of common ſenſe, away with what the world calls a pretty fellow, or a handſome female; let me have honour, and the continued virtues which regularly flow from a good heart;—theſe are the foundation on which matrimonial felicity can be erected, and erected with ſecurity.

Where theſe take root, affection will remain much longer than the honey month: love will not cloy with wedlock, nor loſe its ſalutary influence by a nearer acquaintance. Mr Thomſon, in his finiſhed picture of hymeneal happineſs, alike diſplays the ingenuity of the moraliſt, the painter, and the poet:

"O happy they! the happieſt of their kind,
Whom gentler ſtars unite, and in one fate
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.
'Tis not the coarſer tie of human laws,
Unnatural oft, and foreign to the mind,
That binds their peace; but harmony itſelf,
Attuning all their paſſions into love;
Where friendſhip full exerts her ſofteſt power,
Perfect eſteem, enlivened by deſire
Ineffable, and ſympathy of ſoul.
Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,
With boundleſs confidence; For nought but love
Can

Can anſwer love, and render bliſs ſecure,
Let eaſtern tyrants, from the light of heaven
Seclude their boſom ſlaves, meanly poſſeſs'd
Of a mere lifeleſs, violated form:
While thoſe whom love cements in holy faith,
And equal tranſport, free as nature live,
Diſdaining fear. What is the world to them,
Its pomp, its pleaſure, and its nonſenſe all!
Who in each other claſp whatever fair
High fancy forms, and laviſh hearts can wiſh,
Truth, goodneſs, honour, harmony, and love,
The richeſt bounty of indulgent Heaven."

SPRING, p. 69 & 70.

The moraliſt obſerves, that only one ſort of love is to be found, although he allows a thouſand different copies of it. As a ſpecimen of the firſt quality, a very affecting anecdote is related of a young woman in France, "who, after many difficulties, at laſt obtained her parents conſent of marrying one ſhe ſincerely loved; but being to ſign the inſtrument of contract, ſhe had no ſooner written the firſt letter of her name, than with the exceſs of joy, ſhe fell into a fainting fit, from which ſhe could never be recalled to life." What a valuable prize muſt her lover have loſt! and to him in particular, what a cloud of ſorrow her death would occaſion! Goodneſs of heart,

richly

richly adorned with the delicate feelings of affection, inchants all who perceive it, and well deſerves to be ſtyled the flower of beauty, which the pencil of the beſt artiſt cannot eaſily imitate, and but rarely, in its juſt features, expreſs the original. Thoſe eminently poſſeſſed of it, ſpeak with their eyes, and being ſilent ſubdue.

To meet with a perſon qualified in the various ſignifications of the word, to bear the ſacred character of a friend, is a diſcovery not more rare than divine. Demoſthenes called impoſition in love, the witchcraft of affection. Leonado da Vinci, an Italian painter, was of opinion, that ſome ſublime ſubjects are beſt deſcribed by negatives. Therefore he gives a delineation of falſe friendſhip, by an ivy thruſting down the wall on which it grew. Examples may eaſily be multiplied, in every age and country, to preſerve the credit of this painter's negatives. But the genuine is not ſo eaſily defaced; like the good tree, it will prove its quality by the character of its fruit. The wintry blaſt of oppoſition will not obſcure its fame, nor retard its progreſs. Perhaps the following relation may not be altogether out of ſeaſon, it is a copy of ſingular benevolence.

nevolence. I muſt own I think the introduction highly over-ſtrained, and a ſacrifice to which very few, influenced by real affection, would ever have conſented. But if the prologue is ſomewhat inconſiſtent, the cataſtrophe produces every event neceſſary to form as fine a picture of ſincere affection, as ever was exhibited in dramatic dreſs. A young Roman repaired to Athens, to finiſh his education, reputed at that time one of the firſt ſeminaries of inſtruction, in that or any other country. Fate, which often acts with irreſiſtible authority, and has a ſurpriſing power in forming connections, preſented him, in a ſhort time, with a companion deſerving of his eſteem, in the moſt extenſive latitude. They ſoon became a principal topic of converſation; every eye beheld them with wonder, every tongue was laviſh in their praiſe. As a phenomenon of this nature has commonly ſomething in its progreſs out of the uſual mode, we ſhall haſten to view the ſingular traits of this friendly painting. The Athenian had fixed his eyes on a female of merit and family. The partiality with which ſhe was diſtinguiſhed by virtue ſo conſpicuous, and a character adorned with the firſt-rate abilities,

ties, as well as a combination of all the other beauties requiſite to ſpeak a poliſhed mind, could not but be flattering: ſo that the increaſe of her affection kept pace with his own: ſo ſoon as the ſecret took wing, it was wafted abroad; converſation caught the report, and accelerated its progreſs, in proportion to the prevailing element of affection or humour through which it paſſed. Circumſtances were ſo favourably conducted, that all their acquaintances unanimouſly concluded their happineſs ſure, and faſt ripening into enjoyment; when a new event haſtily ſtarted up, to change its direction, and to damp the joy of this ſo much wiſhed for felicity. The Roman was all of a ſudden ſeized with a complication of maladies, which ſeemed to prognoſticate at leaſt a raging fever, if not a more fatal conſequence. Phyſicians were called, medicines applied, and proper nurſes provided; but his complaint ſeemed to have taken ſo firm a root, as to baffle the power of every application. The Athenian, who felt more on the occaſion than the whole of his acquaintances, and who was ſcarcely a moment from his ſide, ſeeing him one day ſomewhat calm, and none but themſelves

ſelves in the room, he turned the converſation to the ſymptoms of his diſorder, and hinted that he thought them more of a mental, than of a bodily nature. He candidly replied, that the cauſe of his ſickneſs ought to remain for ever a ſecret, as he knew the cure would not be obtained. He was of opinion, in a ſituation ſo critical, that concealment was neceſſary, and common prudence required it. My aſtoniſhment is great, and the ſound I can ſcarcely credit: What! ſays the Grecian, has our friendſhip all along been a bubble? What have you ever ſeen in my conduct to give the leaſt authority to all this diſtruſt? Is my ſincere attachment treated with the ungenerous conſtruction of hatred? No ſacrifice would I grudge, however coſtly, that could be the happy means of purchaſing conſolation, or of reſtoring your health. Pauſing for a reply, after giving vent to a group of broken ſighs, the expreſſion ſtole from the Roman, as if expiring for want of confidence to utter it. "Your female friend," was all that his faultering tongue could pronounce. He looked at him, and ſeemed to be loſt in ſilent tenderneſs; but after an apparent ſtruggle with his

his feelings, he thus ſpoke: Kind fate, direct me in this critical dilemma, both how to ſpeak and act. If I gratify my own inclination, I loſe my friend: If I relinquiſh her to whom I have already offered my hand, my honour ſhall be tarniſhed with a cloud of diſgrace, and my name branded with laſting infamy: Well, let the world juſtify my conduct, or condemn me: let it ſay what it will, I am reſolved to prolong your life; live, and ſhe ſhall ſurely be yours. The preliminaries are already adjuſted, and the day of our marriage is fixed. A propoſal from you, at ſo late a period, might in reality be deemed an inſult; and your hopes of happineſs prove precarious, perhaps be for ever fruſtrated. I will marry, and you ſhall bed with her. Into her apartment I will convey you privately, and when the light is extinguiſhed, return, and leave you to occupy my place; in hopes that Providence may ſo regulate matters, as that our raſh enterpriſe may at leaſt terminate in your happineſs, whatever frowns of fortune I may have yet to encounter. The promiſe was made with ſincerity, and the engagement immediately performed. The light of the morning made a diſ-

covery, not more new than unexpected. Her amazement was so great, that she could scarcely credit her own eyes; to make an apology, or proposals of reconciliation, was but labour in vain. She soon left him to ruminate on the rash part he had acted; and went to consult her parents, how to regulate herself, and what she should resolve on. After the first gust of passion was in some measure subdued, and reason began to resume its empire, they, as well as herself, thought it the best policy to wink at, or at least appear passive in respect of all that had passed; and, as the next creditable step, agreed that they should also be married. A train so favourable, unlocked the Athenian, and made him venture once more to show them his face. Rather out of compliment to the Roman, than any regard they had for himself, they seemed to treat him with their usual politeness; and in appearance he shared as formerly in their kindness. But so soon as the married couple departed, and went home to Rome, he felt the effect of their resentment: her relations could no longer conceal their spleen; a confiscation of all his property immediately took place. His name was erased from

their public records; and they paſſed a decree, in which he was baniſhed for ever from the city. Not knowing where to direct his ſteps, he wandered from place to place, till his dreſs had almoſt loſt its colour, as well as his character its credit. One day muſing on paſt tranſactions, all at once he awakens from his dream of uncertain peregrination. Was it for nothing I made a conqueſt of my affection? Shall not he for whom I loſt my all, meet me with the face of a friend? let me at leaſt make a trial.—His courage ſupported him very well on his journey, till he reached the ſuburbs of the city; but the moment he entered Rome, and underſtood the rank and dignity to which his friend was raiſed, reflections on his own miſconduct ſtared him in the face, and damped the ardour of his reſolution. The eye of him who had beheld his better days, and ſeen him baſking in the ſun-ſhine of fortune, he could not bear to encounter in the weeds of a pilgrim. Entertaining no concern from the danger of wild beaſts, or the fear of famine, he formed a haſty reſolution, of retiring to the woods, and concealing himſelf from the eye of the world; for life was already become a burden.

He only proceeded a ſhort way, when he was violently aſſailed with furious winds and rain; but kind Providence had not yet deſerted him: a hoſpitable cove appeared in view, which ſeemed to encourage and invite him to take ſhelter under its generous roof. Fatigue and anxiety ſoon drew the curtain of repoſe over his weary eyelids; and that reſt, which often forſakes the bed of down, lent him its ſalutary enjoyment, in his ſolitary habitation.

The brightening beams of day had ſcarcely begun to ſmile, when the echo of an alarm reſounded from every corner of his lonely grotto. The ſteps of the traveller had been haſtily interrupted by the view of a mangled body, which had fallen a victim to the ſavage hand of ſome degenerate heart. Suſpecting, from his appearance and ſituation, this barbarous action to be the conſequence of his lawleſs exertion, he is charged with the horrid murder, and has nothing to offer in his own defence. No oppoſition being given, he is thought to have freely acknowledged himſelf the perpetrator of this cruel act, and conſequently ſoon lodged in a ſituation, deſtined to contain characters of coarſer feelings, and of much

much more depraved morals, than his own. When he was brought before the judges, however, he was ſoon recogniſed by one of them; his former friend who plainly perceived ſtrong traces of his old companion in his countenance, aſked his name, and if ever he had been at Athens. He anſwered in the affirmative. The judge, without any further ceremony, threw off his gown, placed himſelf cloſe by his ſide, and declared himſelf the delinquent. A ſerious altercation took place, and the contention was maintained with determined firmneſs. The whole court, quite aſtoniſhed, appointed them different apartments, till ſome inquiry ſhould be made into this dark chapter of accidents. Remorſe ſeized the real criminal, when the noiſe of this ſingular relation reached his ear; and even though at a diſtance from the ſeat of juſtice, he appears there upon the next day of trial. Each of the other two ſtill adhered to the point they had formerly advanced. But this third perſon places the caſe in a quite different poſition; as well as in colours much more natural. The candid ſtrain of his addreſs ſoon commanded attention, while he thus ſpoke: Theſe men can

in no form come under the deſcription of agreſſors. He then ſincerely wiſhed the ſame tone of juſtification could be applied to himſelf. But he would by no means attempt to extenuate either his diſgrace, or his guilt. He declared that he could not endure the thought, that two innocent perſons ſhould ſuffer either accuſation, or puniſhment, for what he alone had committed. He then acknowledged the atrociouſneſs of his crime, and that it was at variance with the laws of God, contrary to every feeling of humanity; and that all ſuch criminals were not only a reproach to the name of man, a diſhonour to their relations and country, but were alſo left a prey to endleſs miſery. He ſtill further obſerved, that the inteſtine wars occaſioned by ſuch outrageous breaches of juſtice, and the ſacred obligations which are the bond of union in all civilized nations, or well regulated ſocieties, was always followed by an incurable diſeaſe. Therefore, without the leaſt equivocation, he would ſettle the gloomy buſineſs before them, by the only amendment then in his power, which was a free confeſſion of his guilt, and a ſacrifice of himſelf to juſtice. His criminal conduct deſerved

ved the ſevereſt puniſhment, and he felt a remorſe much more poignant than any one elſe could paint or deſcribe. Whatever degree of ſeverity the judges, in their wiſdom, might ſee proper to inflict, he would ſtrive to bear with becoming reſignation; a duty which is laudable, when conſcience ſupports the mind, and pleads freedom from the charge of depravity; but nowiſe meritorious when loaded with accumulated accuſations of guilt. The generous open manner of the offender excited univerſal compaſſion; he ſoon felt the effect of their clemency, for the prevailing voice cried for a pardon; which was granted without heſitation. The innocence of the other two being ſufficiently teſtified, they were diſmiſſed with a degree of aſtoniſhment, bordering on veneration. The judge takes his friend into a private family, where they were at liberty to enjoy themſelves. He inſiſted on a true relation of all his misfortunes, ſince the time of their ſeparation: and ſo ſoon as he finiſhed his narration, ſaid to him, My good friend, how much am I indebted to you? and how much do I ſtill owe you? I ſhall lay all ceremony aſide, and ſhow that I am not quite

ungrateful.

ungrateful. I have a ſiſter, whom I will venture to recommend as a wife. Should her perſon and manner gratify your taſte, I promiſe that every other conſideration ſhall be made agreeable to you; for you ſhall ſhare in my fortune and friendſhip, while I live. This Roman female poſſeſſed extraordinary merit; and, upon the whole, it was thought he had gained much by the exchange. Their remaining days were uncommonly fortunate, and continued to ſhine with the rays of unbroken felicity.

The opinion of thoſe diſtinguiſhed by taſte and diſcernment, reſpecting women as well as other objects, will always bear reflection. Though every ſound deſerves not to be ſet to muſic, the following ſenſible quotation requires no apology: "A female of merit, whoſe mind is improved by a virtuous and refined education, retains, in her declining years, an influence over the men more effectual, than ever ſhe acquired by her beauty: ſhe is then the delight of her friends, as much as ſhe was formerly that of her admirers: for a reſpectable character is a flower which we cultivate for its ſcent or beauty, one of the graces of nature, one of the objects which

which beautify the creation, admired by all men in all ages, which our fathers valued, and which we after them likewiſe eſteem." How ſtately does female elegance appear, when it comes forward adorned with the rich colours, neat attire, and poliſhed ſtrokes of the hiſtorian; or, when deſcribed by the no leſs expreſſive pencil, and beautiful delineations of the poet. The united efforts of theſe painters give ſuch a glow of animation to the whole picture, as to make the reader almoſt wiſh for a ſight of the original character: What a beautiful encomium, how ſimple, unaffected, and laconic, is that which was made on Phocion's wife: "She firſt arrayed herſelf in meekneſs and temperance, and then put on whatever more was neceſſary." The character of Pliny's wife is likewiſe comprehenſive, and briefly expreſſed; who was ſaid to be "the beſt of wives, and the beſt beloved." The repreſentation is natural, eaſy, and divine. The idea theſe convey will require no dictionary to explain; the conſtruction is quite obvious. Sincerity of heart, and ſimplicity of outward appearance, are the ornamental habit of her who deſerves to be taken notice of. "Solomon, who had

had made the tour of the faſhionable world, complains, (Eccleſ. vii. 28.), "that one man among a thouſand he had found, but a woman in all that number he found not." I ſuſpect much, when he uttered this harſh expreſſion, he had been too often converſant with women of inferior worth, and therefore ſeldom met with any heroine of ſterling merit, who loved virtue too ſincerely, to ſacrifice it for a ſhadow; and admired a good name more than his dazzling grandeur. Were he to appear in our age, how much would he ſeem ſurpriſed, to find many of our females ſo far ſuperior to thoſe of his time. The treaſure of genuine virtue, and the flow of diſintereſted benevolence, is not the production of every ſoil, nor the principal feature of every character; but I know one whoſe life and manners brighten to the view, like the cheerful ſmiling ſun, whoſe merit requires no panegyric; who is ſingular in every moral virtue; whoſe heart will melt with tenderneſs, and ſhed the tear of ſympathy for ſorrows not her own; whoſe ſilent ſenſe and modeſty utter a thouſand beauties; whoſe very looks are expreſſive of purity. I could name her, who,

when

when others were folded in the arms of ſleep, or ſpending their morning-hours in adjuſting their dreſs, and trifling away time at their toilet,—has been diligently engaged in a different employment, and has been ready to ſhare with others the fruit of her labour; liberally ſupplying the poor, and reaching her bread to the needy. Models of this kind have been found in palaces, and examples worthy of imitation ſeen in a cottage; ſo that we can neither fix on rank in life as the ſtandard of excellence, nor look for genuine goodneſs for ever in low ſtations. A plebeianeſs, who, under many diſadvantages, ſhould maintain elegance in her manner, judgement in her taſte, and virtue in all her actions, would ſurely deſerve to be ſaluted as the morning ſtar; and no good heart would ever envy her ſucceſs in the world, however eminent the ſtation to which ſhe might be raiſed. Sempronia had been much diſtinguiſhed by the liberal gifts of fortune, beſides high birth, genteel education, and engaging wit; ſhe was alſo in poſſeſſion of (what the giddy and thoughtleſs would value more than the generous endowments of modeſty), incomparable beauty: yet theſe

were

were no ſcreen of protection, when the gloomy meſſenger of terror aroſe in haſte to ſalute her. Why heaves her breaſt? what robs her of her gaiety? When languiſhing on a death-bed, does ſhe read with joy each day's ſucceſſive improvement? Does her ſun look bright at its ſetting? Is the curtain every where embelliſhed with the pleaſing beams, in which former years were clad? Does the part ſhe has acted exhibit the repreſentation of a rich landſcape, under loaded increaſe in every direction, and ſweetly perfumed with fragrant flowers? Ah! behold her looking back with a bluſhing countenance on the falſe evaneſcent ſcene! when the tide of vice ran high, when depravity ruſhed on with impetuoſity, and vanity rolled on vanity. See the gloomy ſpectre of awakened crimes, angry, ſulky, ſtalking in ſad and ſable robes! What may we ſuppoſe the tone of her thoughts, at the cloſing period of life? "Happy thoſe who fed their minds with Virtue's conſcious dignity." Nearer the apparition then approaches, reaves from her the hopes of future fame, and gives the deadly blow. How different the colours of life, in the character of the virtuous female, and her who has

fled from decency. What a degree of ſincere affection, and moral refinement will naturally command, when nicely connected with the beauties of virtue. What an affecting picture do we ſee in the deſcription of Virginia: her tragical concluſion in the cauſe of virtue, one would imagine, might ſoften even the heart of a ſavage; and draw tears from eyes unaccuſtomed to weep. What feeling heart, in poſſeſſion of the leaſt ſpark of humanity, could behold, unmoved, an innocent female, in the blooming graces of youth, ſtruggling to preſerve her honour unſullied, deſpiſing the wealth and power of a Decemvir, while her virtue and fame were in jeopardy!

This angel-form, though ever loaded with a burden of ſorrow, appears with ſurpriſing dignity. Her beams were heavenly, and might have been expected to ſhine long, with unclouded luſtre; but, ah! how dark and gloomy the ſcene is become! See her fair boſom ſwelling with killing and unmerited pain. That innocence that needs not fear any eye, nor dread the glare of day; that great guardian of virtue, in this diſgraceful caſe, finds neither credit nor

compaſſion. Like a menial ſlave, this treaſure of virtue, is led to the forum. There the unrighteous judge had already appeared, and what was to be expected from a wretch who had laid his conſcience aſleep, and, as a ſlave to infamy, had already devoted this unfortunate maid to ruin. Who could behold her in ſuch imminent danger, and remain callous? Who could look at her face, and obſerve her eye overflow with the tears of diſtreſs, like rolling waves chacing each other, where formerly pure affection darted its enlivening beam,—and not ſincerely regret the transformation of the ſcene? "The glowing ſympathy that feels, and kindly ſpeaks the accents of the heart," could not but ſhare in her ſufferings, and ſorely lament to ſee virtue ſo conſpicuous ſo cruelly oppreſſed. But as the infamous name of Appius muſt excite univerſal abhorrence, to dwell longer on this uncommon cataſtrophe, can be no pleaſant taſk to any perſon tinctured with the leaſt colour of humanity.

Having no particular characters in view in theſe delineations, and no other deſign than to repreſent the diſtinction which genuine virtue ought

ought to introduce, inſtead of pretending to a correſponding key, or looking for a character to whom the imputation may belong, it is beſt, in every caſe, to take care not to deſerve the firſt, and pray to God, that a copy of the laſt may not be ſeen in our days, nor ever acted in our land.

"A good name," ſays the great King of Iſrael, "is better than precious ointment." The voice of fame ſurely deſerves reſpect, and ſolid judgement will always think ſo. Regularity of conduct, or conſiſtency of ſentiment, can ſeldom ariſe, and will never continue long on a falſe foundation: neither ſhall deceiving colours maintain the credit of reality for any length of time. Envy, with low deſigns, too often finds a ſecret pleaſure in eclipſing the luſtre it cannot reach; but however artfully the dagger of detraction may be directed, it will generally miſs its aim, if truth forms no part of the accuſation. In the ſober breaſt, juſtice erects its throne, where, next to the approbation of an all-ſeeing eye, conſcience occupies the character of a judge. In vain ſhall the world acquit, when criminality is the reſult of its deciſion; and if the inward

monitor freely abſolve, the falſe ſentence which the tongue of malice may uncharitably paſs, ought to ſit very eaſy. On the female of character many gaze, not with a deſign to copy her elegance, but to ſearch for imperfections: and the fewer of theſe they diſcover, the more ſecure will her beauty remain; but the greater is their diſappointment. Mankind, in a body, are not eaſily impoſed upon; and the fame which diſcretion, or an amiable line of conduct, never fails to eſtabliſh, will always bear an inſpection, and always continue in eſtimation. But the female who conſiders the public opinion as a matter of ſpeculation or indifference, muſt have departed a great way from the path of common ſenſe. A pane of glaſs, when once broken, can never be cemented, ſo as not to offend the eye, or eſcape diſcernment. It is much better to wear a meagre name, than an wounded virtue. Should a character have the misfortune to ſuffer from falſe aſperſions, while innocence remains unſhaken, it will ſoon have its reſurrection and credit; ſpring up, with unwithered bloom, in its genuine vigour; and when once the reproachful clouds are ſcattered, its luſtre, inſtead

of

of fading from an unmerited eclipſe, will rather reach the meridian of beauty. "One hour changed the fetters of Joſeph into a chain of gold; and he was honoured with the ſecond chariot in Egypt!" Good offices torment malice, much more than any other kind of revenge: for when ill-deſigned perſons are once able to throw their opponent off the hinges of diſcretion, then they are quite in their element, let tart words fall, and ſet inquiry at work; but by bearing the ſtorm patiently, the arrows of premeditated ruin will at laſt recoil on thoſe who diſcharged them, without any injury to the perſon againſt whom they were directed. Having ſlipped away rather abruptly from the alluſion to the pane of glaſs, I ſhall here give it another glance. The female character is equally delicate, and liable, when a flaw is viſible, to the ſame rules of criticiſm: like the bite of the tarantula, it can never be cured. Therefore ſterling reputation is truly no ſmall ornament. Men of the moſt diſſipated morals cannot always ſupport their own theory, at the expence of goodneſs; nor refuſe their ſecret tribute of reſpect to the female of finiſhed qualifications; nor is

the heart of any ſo wicked, as to conſider virtue in reality as a piece of uſeleſs furniture; however much in their own vicious practice they may affect to deſpiſe it. The amiable female, who has given ſtrong and repeated proofs of a correct taſte, and a ſteady uniformity of morals, who bluſhes not at the unfaſhionable epithets of piety and religion, nor is aſhamed to be ranked in the antiquated number of thoſe who will not lay aſide ſuch ornaments, for the ſneer of ridicule, or the laugh of the profligate, carries in her poſſeſſion a face of durable beauty, and a ſhield of invincible ſecurity.

How ungenerous to reproach a female, when we ought to admire her virtues. But it is a ſelf-evident truth, that uncommon diſcretion, or beauty of mind, is an open inſult to inferior or hypocritical characters. When thoſe who have undervalued themſelves by impropriety of conduct, view the competition as beyond their reach, and plainly obſerve, that their own name and fame cannot procure them the ſame reſpect, nor riſe to the ſame ſtandard of excellence. The conſequence is, that they contemplate the female of merit, with the ſpiteful eye of envy;

and

and that only for poſſeſſing advantages which ſeem to place their own folly ſo much in view. Therefore, they ſeldom fail to watch narrowly, and if they find the leaſt flaw, they ſoon peſter the world with the publication of it; and the fruit of their induſtry is uſually attended with large commentary notes, calculated either to divert the attention of others from the inconſiſtency of their own conduct, or, if poſſible, to reduce a model of diſtinguiſhed qualities to the ſame level with themſelves. But theſe are glaring frailties, which carry in their train a ſtrong tincture of ſpleen, without the leaſt mixture of charity, emulation, or refinement. To the female deſirous of ſupporting a fair reputation, diſcretion would dictate to ſee ſuch but ſeldom, and neither to covet their ſpirit, nor excite their malice. Thoſe who intereſt themſelves in failings, for which they are not to anſwer, tarniſh the luſtre of that humanity to which they might lay claim, if ſelf-diffidence was a little more natural to them. Many, in delineating the character of their acquaintances, give the picture all the dark colours of revenge, without a ſingle ſhade of compaſſion, or Chriſtian charity. The reflection,

that

that probably they may have greater infirmities of their own to rectify, is removed from their recollection, as a thought they do not chuſe to entertain. But it would not be amiſs for thoſe who are influenced by this humour, to conſider, at the time when they are wantonly circulating their invectives, very likely on innocence, that by ſuch unpolite, inelegant deſcriptions, the complexion of their own hearts is leſs or more expoſed to view. If thoſe who are ſo very fond of cenſure could be perſuaded to dwell more at home, probably the faults of others would not entertain them ſo highly: for if we expect the ſcreen of clemency, as a covering to our own imperfections, it is neceſſary to look with an eye of ſympathy on thoſe of others. Theſe leſſons of benevolence, if well learned, and regularly digeſted, are all calculated to promote reſpect, and procure happineſs. The female of diſcretion will know all this; and therefore, if the failings of her acquaintances come under the eye of her inſpection, ſhe will make them a copy of inſtruction to refine upon, and not a ſubject of criticiſm to declaim againſt. She ſhows herſelf the Chriſtian by her language, as well as by her practice.

practice. She raiſes herſelf to reſpect; but it is by humanity and virtue, not by depreciating the character of others. In every circle, a female, on her firſt appearance, has her accompliſhments called in queſtion, her merit haſtily, and often uncandidly decided; proportionable to the taſte or diſpoſition of the party, or the illiberal ſentiments of the raſh critic, who aſpires at the privilege of a judge, and paſſes ſentence with a tone of aſſurance, equal to the Grand Seignior, or as if he himſelf were abſolutely perfect. Even in this age of refinement, every female, deſirous to maintain an unblemiſhed character, will find that caution is not become an obſolete term, but is fully as neceſſary now as it was in preceding periods. A modeſt engaging manner, a meek humane heart, in connection with a ripe underſtanding, though the richeſt of jewels, (experience may convince us), do not always prove that rock of ſecurity, or laſting refuge, that ignorance of mankind, or of the world, ſeem ready or willing to admit. Ungenerous criticiſms too often borrow their authority from deliberate miſchief, and extend their fatal influence with the cruelty of ſavages. This dangerous

gerous ſpirit, or poverty of morals, is not found in the volume of charity,—but in the book of ill-nature; and, according to its Pagan text, human nature is at times examined, not with any grains of allowance for the imperfections incident to mortals, but rather as if they ought to poſſeſs the perfection of angels. Should a female regulate her conduct by the rules of reſerve, ſeem diſtant and cautious, the epithet prude is liberally beſtowed on her; if ſhe is agreeable, open, and unaffected, the imputation of levity is pronounced, with equal impropriety. It were to be wiſhed, this cenſorious faſhion would effectually ceaſe, and that proper encouragement were given to habits of plain honeſty.

I ſhall ſuppoſe the ſcene of action, for the following narration, in the iſland of Man; but whether it is merely an ideal picture, or the materials of real occurrences, conducted by the irreſiſtible authority of a divine hand, I will by no means take upon me to determine. Poſitively to fix the ſignature of Truth, to actions related in the ſtyle of romance, would be highly improper, and far from treating that venerable figure with the reſpect due to its dignity. Though I

do

do not recollect to have found any traces of the following ſtory, in either hiſtory or novels, yet I muſt acknowledge I have heard ſomething that bore a ſtrong reſemblance to the principal characters; but if its phyſiognomy has not undergone a complete repair, it has at leaſt the credit of a modern dreſs. Allowing it to be nothing elſe but the child of fancy, pernicious conſequences cannot poſſibly enſue from a deſire of refining on mental beauty: for if the moral it inculcates reflects the leaſt credit on the intereſt of virtue, or gives vice that degrading aſpect which tends to produce diſtaſte, and prevent imitation, the painting cannot be detrimental to either law or goſpel.

Peel is one of the towns in Man. And what though we ſhould make Mr Griffin one of the principal characters in this relation, with an eſtate well cultivated, and free from all incumbrances. And what if we ſhould alſo ſuppoſe the old man, his father, lingering on a death-bed, and quite emaciated, calling his only ſon before him to receive his laſt bleſſing and counſel, and addreſſing him in a ſtrain ſimilar to the following: "My ſon, liſten to the voice of inſtruction. Did

you

you ever hear an orator treat his ſubject in a more pathetic ſtyle, than the expreſſive eloquence of agitation, ſickneſs, and death? The end of all motion is reſt: the end of life is death. The ſun rejoiceth in his progreſs, and ſo does man in his ſtrength; but his ſtrength continueth not. He flouriſhes for a while, and then vaniſheth for ever. Eternity is a pleaſing proſpect; but what makes it ſo? only the reflection of a well-ſpent life. Therefore, my ſon, if you wiſh to triumph over the fear of diſſolution, and to be put in poſſeſſion of invariable happineſs, at the cloſe of that important period, let ſincerity direct your devotion, and conſtant attention to equity characteriſe your actions; let love to God, and benevolence to men, comprehend the ſignification, and exemplify your belief of the ſoundeſt articles of Chriſtian faith. To fly in the face of every ſacred obligation, is impiety in its moſt glaring colours; and exultation in ſuch conduct exhibits a picture too dark to deſerve approbation: a picture which few could have the inſolence to recommend. Thoſe who give fugitive ſhadows the place of ſolid ſubſtances, or vaguely imagine that the refuſe of their

days,

days, or the dregs of their years, is a fit offering for their Maker, make an exceedingly unjuſt calculation of the buſineſs. The beautiful colours, and engaging features, of him who is ripe in divine improvement, is a mark of diſtinction worthy of unfading laurels; and which can ſcarcely be heightened, unleſs it be by a contraſt with him who is grown old in ſin. Agreeable to the ſyſtem of learned ſages, an honeſt man (while oſtentation is ſuppreſſed) will gain more by letting the world ſee him as he is, than by ſtriving to appear what he is not. Boaſting is always thought to proceed from ignorance of the world, and on that account is conſidered as a defect in politeneſs. Xenophon ſays, that praiſes have a very muſical and charming accent from the mouth of another, but are very flat and untunable when they terminate in ſelf-exaltation. Profit or pleaſure is the ruling principle, or animating power of all our purſuits. We all know, that whatever is leaſt attended with feelings of remorſe, or grounds of repentance, muſt claim the cloſeſt connection with happineſs: a command of temper, united with virtue and integrity, poſſeſſes this inherent quality, and

therefore the cultivation of it is not only commendable, but abſolutely neceſſary. Pyrrhus, a famous fencing-maſter, "when any ſcholar came to learn his art, propoſed, for the firſt leſſon, to ſubdue himſelf; for Anger, he obſerved, would look where to ſtrike, but not where to defend." Among other judicious inſtructions, we may naturally ſuppoſe, that the matrimonial connection would be recommended, and the character of the female from whom the greateſt ſhare of happineſs might be expected deſcribed. Taſte bears a ſignificant emphaſis, and ought to be the predominant principle in an engagement of ſo much importance. Both the heart and eye ſhould have fair play; becauſe a gratification from any other conſideration than that of ſincere affection, can afford only a precarious proſpect of happineſs; for forced love can produce no pleaſing effect. The ſame ſincerity that directs the tongue of candor to ſpeak kind language, will engage the heart of humanity to gratify the hopes it has raiſed. The ſcriptures ſtrongly recommend to follow peace with all the world. The mode in which you may beſt acquit yourſelf, in the different relations of life, is clearly

and

and beautifully delineated in the expreſſive pages of inſpiration. And the divine oracles are by far the beſt commentary you can conſult, in regard to your duty. My ſon, this is all I am able to ſpeak,—may God be your friend.—I bid you adieu."

The ſon effectually diſcharged his duty to the remains of a kind and affectionate parent, and in every reſpect conducted himſelf with a degree of decorum ſuitable to the occaſion. After ſorrow had begun to abate its firſt gloom, in order to regain his former cheerfulneſs, he reſolved to give ſome of his acquaintances a call. A reſpectable family, of the name of Manlius, had the honour of his firſt viſit. Mr Manlius was a gentleman of a pleaſant manner, frank and facetious, with whom he had long lived on a very friendly and familiar footing. Having diſcourſed upon various topics, marriage at length became the ſubject of their converſation. Mr Griffin argued much in favour of a voluntary compact. He hinted, that arbitrary or compulſive meaſures might very well become the character of ſlaves; but, in a free ſtate, was quite inconſiſtent with the independent ſpirit of virtue. He thought

freedom of choice ſhould always be allowed, unleſs a ridiculous inclination made the connection a matter of ridicule. In that caſe, he thought it requiſite, and conſiſtent with ſound policy, to make uſe of every innocent ſtratagem that could tend to divert the progreſs of an affection that prognoſticated miſery in every view. He then ended his harangue with a ſhort comment on the beauty and good breeding of his friend's daughters. To two of my girls, ſays the father, I intend giving a fortune; but as for the youngeſt, I mean to act contrary to the articles of your creed; for whoever makes choice of her muſt pay me down eleven hundred pounds.

A demand ſo ſingular excited his curioſity. He had been acquainted with her before, and therefore required no great time to prove her quality. He found her behaviour and good ſenſe, in every point, equal to her appearance. The money he made no ſcruple to pay; for he plainly ſaw ſhe was a jewel of ineſtimable value. After ſettling theſe premiſes with the father, he went to acquaint the young lady with this extraordinary tranſaction. He modeſtly intimated, that he had made a purchaſe of her; but told her

her at the ſame time, that, notwithſtanding of what had happened, he was reſolved to take no advantage of her inclination: And ſo far from inſiſting on the fulfilling of this engagement, or laying the leaſt reſtraint upon her taſte, he informed her, that from that moment ſhe was at liberty to chuſe for herſelf. She politely thanked him for his partiality; and added, that whatever clouds might often concur to eclipſe the luſtre of ſincere affection in ſuch circumſtances, on her ſide no remaining gloom darkened the proſpect, had any traces of exiſtence, nor was the information in the leaſt diſagreeable to her. She ſtill further obſerved, that ſhe had but one heart and one face, and theſe ſhe would give him along with her hand, without the leaſt heſitation, whenever he pleaſed to make the demand. Taking her at her word, the miniſter was ſent for, and they were immediately made happy. Her luſtre, like the morning ſtar, dazzled all around. Her many virtues daily gained credit, and increaſed in beauty. But an unhappy accident drew the curtain of unexpected diſaſter, over the fair proſpect of their proſperity, and

nipt haſtily in the bud, all the flowers of their future joy.

A captain, of the name of *Dark-craft*, had anchored his ſhip at no great diſtance from this elegant dome, where virtue ſat ſmiling in every corner, and wore the garb of felicity every hour of the day. A wintry blaſt unfortunately wafted him aboard. The captain and he began freely to taſte the juice of the vine. The jovial glaſs went briſkly around; and as the liquor began to operate, it gave their tongues an additional volubility. Mr Griffin, as he might with great propriety, enlarged handſomely on the various endowments of his valuable partner. But the captain ſaid he ſuſpected much the extravagance of his eſtimation; and to give plauſibility to his ſuggeſtion, he had recourſe to natural ſimilitudes. The ſilver and droſs are not diſcriminated, he obſerved, till they undergo an experiment in the refiner's furnace; by the ſame rule, virtue untried cannot claim the honour of being genuine. The other aſſured him, that he was perfectly convinced of his wife's fidelity; and would not heſitate a moment to pledge his eſtate againſt his ſhip and cargo, that he would find

find from any experiment he choſe to make, the repreſentation noway exaggerated. The captain took him at his word, and a legal bond was immediately written, and ſigned before witneſſes, by both parties. Mr Griffin was to remain on board till the time agreed upon for the execution of the plot ſhould expire, without giving the leaſt inſtruction to his wife, or divulging the ſecret. The captain declared, he would cheerfully fulfil his part of the engagement, if in two days he did not accompliſh his point. Money, which is but too ready in every country to procure accomplices in the cauſe of vice, was not without influence in this tranſaction. He ſoon found ways and means to gain the good opinion of Mrs Griffin's nurſe: *Sly-cut* was not very ſqueamiſh in her principles, being one of thoſe creatures that would do any thing for pelf. She began her attack with groſs equivocation, made her believe that one of her friends had found a cheſt with blankets on the ſhore, and alledged, that it could not in the leaſt ſeem a matter of ſurpriſe, that, in caſe of a ſearch, ſhe thought it would be perfectly ſecure, with a character of her conſequence; and declared, that ſhe would

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eſteem the indulgence a particular favour, if ſhe would ſuffer it to remain in her bed-room for one night. Suſpecting no colour of treachery, this amiable character at once gave her conſent to the propoſal; and, under the darkneſs of night, this neſt of miſchief was conveyed to her apartment. A hole was made oppoſite to his eye, where he might take his obſervations; and an inſide lock, that he could open at pleaſure, gave him every neceſſary ſecurity.

At the proper hour of reſt, this virtuous beauty kneeled before her God, to expreſs her gratitude, and implore the continuation of his mercy. After having finiſhed her devotion, ſhe began to undreſs; and this monſter of iniquity was all attention. The viſible mark of a key on her breaſt, which was a figure very uncommon, ſurpriſed him leſs than her bright appearance, and compoſed manner. Before ſhe lay down, he ſaw her take a purſe from her pocket, and put it into a cheſt of drawers; a prize which this demon of miſchief looked upon as already in his clutches. So ſoon as he found this patroneſs of virtue ſafely aſhore on the land of reſt, he ſtole from his deteſtable cabin, to look

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for plunder: He ſearched the drawers, and ſoon ſecured whatever he found anſwerable to his purpoſe; but when her profile and purſe fell into his unhallowed hands, he quietly retired to his lurking place, having enough for his purpoſe in poſſeſſion. At the dawn of day, the cheſt was removed, and this ravenous wolf once more ſet at liberty. Exulting in his wickedneſs, he haſtened aboard, and boaſted of favours he could never have obtained: declared he had made great progreſs in the ſcience of aſtronomy, and expected he would admit his practice of aſtrology; from the ſhape of the key on his wife's breaſt. He appealed to himſelf, if that diſcovery was not a ſufficient proof, that he ſtood ſecure in her favour. The other objected to it as a piece of information he might eaſily acquire, without the leaſt acquaintance with her. Producing her profile and purſe, I hope then this will convince you of my conqueſt; as being *argumentam ad feminam;* and added, that ſhe was much pleaſed with his company, and wiſhed him to repeat his viſits as often as he could make it convenient. The poor infatuated huſband could not reſiſt the evidence, but ſwallowed this doctrine

without

without the ſmalleſt doubt. He acted no part of the prudent, honeſt, and ingenuous huſband: for, without mentioning the matter to his wife, or giving her the leaſt hint of his ſuſpicion, like a poor ſilly fool, he delivers his charter to the captain, and into the truth of his report made no further inquiry. He applied to this ragamuffin for ſome of his hands, who got ready at command, when the buſineſs was clearly underſtood; for he was ſhaking with fear, leſt by ſome accident his villany ſhould be diſcovered. Having made all things ſnug, Mrs Griffin's conſent was ſoon obtained, to accompany them to what ſhe thought a party of pleaſure; but it was a cruel ſtratagem that haſtened her ſteps into complicated miſery. They made away with her from the land, and reaching a barren rock at ſome diſtance from ſhore, left her alone, to make her complaint to the wilds and waves. Her tears and entreaties were entirely fruitleſs, and had no effect on the inhuman ſavages, to whom her landing was intruſted. She was ſcarcely an hour in this unpleaſant ſituation, however, when ſhe ſaw a ſhip in full ſail, coming near to the place where ſhe was; and

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kind Providence, which often works miracles in critical moments, ſoon appeared to alleviate her calamity, and to convert her darkneſs into light. A hoop, which the rolling wave, in compaſſion for her diſtreſs, drove within her reach, was employed, with her handkerchief at one end of it, as a ſignal of diſtreſs; and her little flag was ſoon obſerved. The captain, whoſe name was *Titus Fairline*, was by no means deſtitute of virtue or humanity, and therefore ſent his boat and hands immediately to her relief; and bore cloſe to the wind, till ſhe was ſafely brought aboard. The honeſt tars, without the leaſt colour of charity, (as the account ſhe gave of herſelf was not altogether ſatisfactory), concluded, that ſhe was only a faſhionable woman of the town, who having committed ſome *faux paux*, had been left upon that account, and not for the building of a church. As ſoon as her tears had ceaſed to flow, the captain, who ſuppoſed them to have proceeded from the danger ſhe was in, rather than from a ſenſe of injured innocence, or any delicacy of ſentiment ſhe might poſſeſs, began to make propoſals, quite too indelicate for the modeſt ear of his female paſſenger.

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She ſeemed to bear them with ſome degree of patience, till he forgot that decency of language, and that meaſure of reſpect, which virtue, conſcious of its dignity, naturally expects; but then, ſhe thought it perfectly requiſite to aſſume a little courage, and addreſs him with becoming firmneſs. "Sir, you ſeem to be very well verſed in the rudiments of raillery; but ſuch language as yours, like wild birds notes, can never be brought to any regular muſic. Theoginis the poet obſerves, that it is a great burden to a lover of prattle to hold his tongue; but to ſpeak without the leaſt ſhadow of wit or common ſenſe, muſt be equally burdenſome to his company. Obſcene language is a breach of politeneſs, ſhocks reaſon, and deſtroys morality. It is true, the ſituation in which you found me might give countenance to various conjectures. To figures any way uncommon, either in the heavens, or on the earth, people are ready to annex what meaning they pleaſe. Human actions, which admit of the leaſt ſuſpicion, are often blackened with an erroneous conſtruction, and the colours given them by him who attempts to unravel their myſterious parts, ſhew leſs or more of his

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own diſpoſition. I am truly ſenſible that, as my deliverer, I owe you many obligations. But if you ſuppoſe or expect that I am to repay this act of humanity at the expence of my honour and virtue, you will find yourſelf much miſtaken. I ſhall not heſitate one moment to execute the part of Lucretia, if you perſiſt in meaſures ſo deſtructive to the peace of my mind. It is true, I am in your power; but if you offer to abuſe that power, you muſt anſwer at the bar of God, for ſuch a complication of cruelties. Be not ſurpriſed at the boldneſs of my language: for ſeverity, at times, is abſolutely neceſſary, to guard honeſt women from irreparable injury; not only as you uſe your lead to guard you againſt falſe ſoundings, but as veneration doth ſacred things, which often deters the moſt daring of men from treating ſteady virtue with inſolence.

To the ſlaves of vice, contemplations of genuine refinement are ſeldom familiar. All thoſe figures which are written out in the language of folly, or which immorality records in the mind, tend to produce cloudy reflections; and the premiums they beſtow, are only the bluſhes

of ſhame. Suffer me further to repeat the words of a great poet and a Chriſtian:

" Aſpiring youth,
Strive to reſiſt the ſyren voice of vice,
Let none of her inchantments draw thee on
To guileful ſhores, nor meads of fatal joy.
When wiſdom proſtrate lies, the fooliſh ſoul
Is wrapt in viſions of unreal bliſs;
And fading fame diſſolves in air away:
Then 'tis too late to ſeize the prize of virtue."

The captain, finding a different character from what he expected, immediately altered his tone; and began to treat her with all the politeneſs of which he was maſter. From his mild and agreeable manner, ſhe was made to believe, ſhe had nothing further to fear from him: And he made ſuch handſome apologies for his rude behaviour, as were ſufficient to convince her, that he was neither deſtitute of ſound ſenſe nor humanity. He told her, though his curioſity was ſo much awakened, that it would have been more than an ordinary gratification, to have been favoured with her real hiſtory, ſtill he wiſhed for no part of it which required a veil. And though he had no deſire to purchaſe infor-

mation at the expence of creating pain to another; yet he would thank her for a candid reply to one ſingle queſtion, viz. If ever ſhe was married, or if her huſband was in life? to which ſhe anſwered in the affirmative. When he underſtood ſhe had no money, he took the opportunity, when ſhe was upon deck, of writing a card, in which he incloſed twelve guineas, wrapped it up in a pound of tea, and, when juſt going aſhore, inſiſted ſhe would accept of it, and examine its contents when ſhe was at leiſure: which ſhe accordingly did, and unexpectedly found herſelf miſtreſs of a very great treaſure. Her heart ſwelled with joy and gratitude; and, in her prayers to Heaven, the happineſs of her generous benefactor was ſincerely remembered. She ſoon got herſelf neatly equipped in a male dreſs, which ſhe ſuppoſed would prove a greater ſecurity to her than her own. Having travelled ſo far into the country, that no report with regard to herſelf could eaſily overtake her, ſhe began to inquire for a maſter, and was ſoon received into the ſervice of Lord G ——. Being poſſeſſed of the beſt of breeding, and exceedingly handſome, ſhe was

ſoon noticed, and of conſequence brought to attend the table. After ſhe had been ſome time in the family, Lady G—— began to eye young Blyth-fame, which was the name ſhe gave herſelf, as a much greater favourite than a ſervant. Having taken the advantage of Lord G——'s abſence, ſhe began with propoſals which required categorical anſwers, and were fully as plain as they were pleaſant. Blyth-fame, at firſt, acted as if the language had been unintelligible, and the ſignals diſplayed above her capacity to comprehend. There is a viſible modeſty or baſhfulneſs, which commonly accompanies honeſt women: thoſe who weigh their thoughts and manner in the ſcale of diſcretion, are eaſily known; and by the reverſe of the ſame propoſition, the conduct of this Amarilles ſpoke a glaring deficiency in the laws of virtue and common prudence; for ſhe ſeemed to have held in contempt every colour of modeſty. Blyth-fame, after conquering this gale of ſurpriſe, addreſſed her in a ſtyle as unexpected as it was ſeaſonable: "The tenderneſs of Lord G—— to you, upon every occaſion, merits a return the very reverſe of your conduct to-day. Think

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of him this moment as your huſband; think of him as he deſerves; and I am perſuaded, you will bluſh at the thought of acting a part ſo ungenerous, ſo inconſiſtent with the dignity which a character of your conſequence ought to maintain, and with the homage to which affection like his, is truly entitled. Without honour and mutual kindneſs, family-happineſs cannot riſe to reſpect, nor continue long to ſubſiſt; and the fruit of theſe venerable virtues is as much eſteemed by every honeſt heart, as treachery, or yielding to every temptation, is deteſtable and baſe. We are ſure that it is not the ſpinning, nor the quirking of a ſyllogiſm, that gives any weight to an argument, or any beauty to a character in the preſence of our God. No intereſt is equal to that of ſincerity, for gaining his approbation; and if we would preſerve the affection of thoſe with whom we are any way familiar, the ſame argument ſtill holds good: for it is only by cloſe application to the laws of virtue, and by mild generous offices, that we can hope for ſucceſs. Therefore let me recommend to your peruſal, the advice of Polonius in Hamlet,

"The friend thou haſt, and his adoption tried,
Grapple him to thy ſoul with hoops of ſteel."

It is a great misfortune, when rank neglects that Patrician ſpirit of refinement, which is the true, and ought to be the diſtinguiſhing ornament of dignity. For it is lamentable enough, when birth, and a conſpicuous ſtation, look down with a careleſs eye on moral beauties, or conſider virtue and decency as a ceremony they may eaſily ſtep over. Though pupils of this degrading claſs have appeared in every age, and will no doubt continue ſo to do till the end of the chapter, *that* does not in the leaſt extenuate the folly, nor juſtify the practice. And every ſenſible perſon will readily allow, that the leſs ſuch models are copied, ſo much the better. It is ſurely a delightful proſpect to ſee emulation prevail among all ranks, in venerating the ſacred bond of affection, which unites mankind in the various relations in which they ſtand to each other; and thoſe who revere every link, calculated to maintain its uſefulneſs and beauty unblemiſhed, merit the regard of Heaven, and the admiration of the world around them.

I might eaſily multiply examples, from the annals of different nations, of characters whoſe memory and virtuous actions, were deſervedly extolled and immortaliſed by the hiſtorians of their age and country.

Suffer me to repeat an extraordinary report ſent to the Emperor of China: "Agreeable to the order of your Majeſty, for erecting monuments to the honour of women, who have been celebrated for their continency, filial piety, or purity of manners, the viceroy of Canton reports, that, in the town of Sinhvei, a beautiful young woman, named Leang, ſacrificed herſelf to ſave her virtue. In the 15th year of our Emperor Canghi, ſhe was dragged by pirates into their ſhip; and having no other way to eſcape their barbarity, ſhe threw herſelf headlong into the ſea, being impelled by a momentary impulſe of preferring honour and virtue to life itſelf. We purpoſe, according to your Majeſty's order, to erect a triumphal arch for that young woman, and to engrave her ſtory upon it, that it may be preſerved in perpetual remembrance." I now conclude this plain honeſt exhortation, by no other apology, than aſſuring

aſſuring you, that, if you have judgement enough to keep your own ſecret, I ſhall never be the trumpeter of your folly; providing you give me no further trouble upon this ſcore." Notwithſtanding of this friendly counſel, Lord G—— no ſooner reached home, than Blythfame had her character blackened by the foulеſt aſperſions. Colours of depravity were eaſily borrowed from an over-heated imagination, to make her name and dreſs appear perfectly awkward. The nobleman, quite enraged, thought even hanging too lenient a puniſhment. She was ſoon lodged in a gloomy apartment, that perhaps never had the honour of ſuch a gueſt. The reſult of her trial was *baniſhment for life*. She wrote a letter with her own hand to Lord G——, pleaded genteelly for a perſonal interview, inſiſted much that he would condeſcend to viſit her, with two truſty witneſſes; and engaged to produce ſuch proofs of innocence, as he himſelf would readily admit. The ſolicitation was penned with ſuch effectual arguments, as would have moved humanity leſs genuine than Lord G——'s.

As ſoon as he appeared before her, ſhe told him,

him, that nothing but the utmoſt neceſſity could ever have induced her to make a diſcovery which could not fail to wound the feelings of one whom ſhe truly eſteemed; and, to be ſhort, gave him to underſtand, that his own happineſs could not but be greatly impaired, from the information ſhe had to communicate. She then, with undiſſembled modeſty, diſcovered her breaſt; and added, that ſhe was an unfortunate female, doomed to fall under the imputation of crimes ſhe neither did, nor ever would wiſh to commit. Her language was now powerful enough to give her relation that colour of veracity, which but a few days before it could not command. Lord G—— admired her much, and went even ſo far as to make honourable propoſals;—but when he found ſhe could not accept of his offer, he without delay paid her three hundred pounds, for the unmerited injury her character had ſuffered. She then made haſte to leave a place ſo hoſtile to her reputation, and where many ſtrange reports were blazed abroad, with incredible rapidity. She poſted ſome days, without meeting a ſingle adventure, worthy of notice. Overtaking at laſt, upon the road, one of thoſe who perform

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the office of a ſolicitor in courts of equity, ſhe engages him to inſtruct her in the eſſentials of his profeſſion. She made ſuch rapid progreſs in the ſtudy of law, that ſhe was ſoon every where admired; having all the graces that Cheſterfield gives to Marlborough, without the leaſt title to the oppoſite charge, of being eminently illiterate.

As ſoon as ſhe took up buſineſs for herſelf, in the line of an Attorney, an amazing ſucceſs purſued her, and fame attended her banner wherever ſhe appeared. Preſſing buſineſs ſoon called her to a diſtant part of the country. When ſhe had reached the place of her deſtination, ſhe found, in the houſe where ſhe lodged, a poor man, who had been in ſome menial office about the family, ſeized with a ſevere colic, and thought at the point of death. Blyth-fame, whoſe humanity had ſuffered no diminution from her good fortune, was exceedingly attentive to him, and adminiſtered cordials that gave immediate relief. But how great was her pleaſure and ſurpriſe, when ſhe got a full view of her patient, and read Theophilo Griffin in every feature of his face. She aſked, if ever he had a female friend? He replied, that he had,

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and that her name was Agnes Manlius. She then propoſed to engage him for her ſervant; but at the ſame time, gave him to underſtand, that ſhe would only employ a faithful attentive perſon, and a man of character. He told her ſhe might depend upon his honeſty. Well, ſaid ſhe, that is with me the principal requiſite, and an apology for a variety of foibles. She then inquired into the character of the family; of which he gave her this candid deſcription: Mr and Mrs True-faith diſfigure not their creed; for it is not on particular days, nor yet for particular purpoſes, that they uſe the articles of their religion: no, they are in reality what they profeſs to be, plain, honeſt, and induſtrious characters, free from all guile and deceit.

But it will be neceſſary, before I proceed further in the buſineſs, continued ſhe, to know the ſentiments of your maſter and miſtreſs. This point was ſpeedily ſettled; for the matter was no ſooner underſtood, than their conſent was freely obtained. She then and there met with a variety of pleaſant incidents, and, among others, found Captain Fairline, in the perſon of her client: a diſcovery which tended to intereſt her

feelings,

feelings, and ſtrengthen her exertions in his cauſe. His owners were attempting to defraud him of a thouſand pounds, and had hired all the pettifoggers of that place againſt him; when he was adviſed to write for Blyth-fame, whoſe reputation was current every where. Blyth-fame had all the technical terms of the law ſo pat, that ſhe ſoon confounded her opponents, and gained the plea, with expences. The honeſt captain was much taken with the abilities of his lawyer, and told him to make his own terms. Captain Fairline, ſaid ſhe, the generoſity and goodneſs of your heart I well know; and as there is none preſent but ourſelves, to convince you that I have not the leaſt doubt of your honour, allow me to inform you, that I am the very female you took from the rock, and for whom you incloſed the twelve guineas in a pound of tea. You muſt promiſe me inviolable ſecreſy; and this is all the fee I demand. A gold watch, and a diamond ring, he would inſiſt upon her accepting as a preſent: and then they parted in admiration of each other. She and her ſervant went home, with an intention to ſettle all her buſineſs, and return to her native country.

country. At leiſure hours, ſhe diverted herſelf very much with Theophilo, and appeared upon a more familiar footing with him,—than he had any title to expect. She came home one day in great glee, and told him, ſhe had got flattering news for him, which were worth a whole handful of money. She ſaid, ſhe had been looking out a wife for him, and had pitched upon a very handſome girl, with whom, ſhe was perſuaded, he would live quite happy. The poor man could only anſwer her at firſt with tears; but at laſt he exclaimed, Alas! alas! all my happineſs of that kind is already decided. You ſeem, continued ſhe, to take the matter ſo ſeriouſly, that your complaint muſt ſurely ariſe from ſome extraordinary cauſe. To you, Mr Blyth-ſame, I ſhould open my breaſt without reſerve; and from the familiarity with which you have treated me, ſuch confidence you might very naturally expect: for ſince the firſt day of my engagement with you, the ſcene of my life is not more changed, than the diſpoſition of my mind: my enjoyments are pregnant with inexpreſſible tranquility. I have truly experienced more uninterrupted pleaſure in one hour, than I had taſted

for ſeveral years. But, after all, I know, that, for the crime I have committed, you will think I ought to be diſcharged from your ſervice, as a wretch unworthy of compaſſion; while, at the ſame time, your goodneſs of heart will incline you to pity my misfortunes. To complain of diſaſters on ſome particular occaſions, ſaid his maſter, is quite allowable; but to bear adverſity with fortitude and ſilent reſignation, is manly: nay, it is more than manly, for it raiſes human nature above mortality. Think of the animating ſentiments of him who divinely exclaimed,

"Were I as tall as reach the ſky,
Or graſp the ocean in a ſpan,
I would be meaſur'd by my ſoul;
The mind's the ſtandard of the man."

Or, in other words, "My hand I faſten on the ſtars, and bid earth roll, nor feel her idle whirl," You may thoughtleſsly ſuppoſe, the complexion of your troubles ſo dark and unuſual, that others cannot feel the emotion of kindred ſympathy, nor a compaſſionate wiſh to ſhare in your cares; but ſuch a ſuppoſition is raſh and ungenerous, and therefore ought not to be indulged. Faith recommends

recommends to our attention, the model of all refinement. If he who is a ſtranger to imperfection, bears with the beſt of us, we ſhould frequently reflect on his mildneſs and patience; and endeavour, as much as poſſible, to imitate and exemplify the ſame diſpoſition to our fellow-ſufferers. Sorrows are made light by ſharing them; and perhaps your crime may not appear to me in the ſame dark colours, with which the painting of a gloomy imagination, which is ever apt to exaggerate the leading lineaments of the picture, may repreſent it to yourſelf. To feed continually on melancholy or cloudy images, is quite unſuitable to the dignity of a Chriſtian; neither is it paying proper reſpect to the Author of our mercies, who giveth us all things liberally to enjoy, and upbraideth not. Induſtry is neither calculated to create pain, nor to ſow the ſeed of affliction, (which is a plant of ſpontaneous growth), but the balm which religion kindly imparts to the dejected ſpirit; and if it cannot completely heal the wound, it will at leaſt abate its pain, by engaging the body in ſome uſeful exerciſe, or the mind in ſome ſuitable train of thought. Al-

though the child may be out of temper with the parent, for refuſing at certain times the gratification of his fancy; yet he may be made ſenſible, at a future period, how much the judgement of the father was preferable to his own; and of the gratitude he owes him for the intereſt he took in his happineſs. Unexpected treaſures may fall into the hand of a miſer, and princes may confer public honours on whom they pleaſe; but the inheritance of a virtuous name, and the veneration of ages, are badges of diſtinction which muſt in ſome meaſure be the fruit of our own exertions, rather than of accidental circumſtances. The man that would be truly rich, ſays Seneca, muſt not ſo much increaſe his fortune, as ſtudy to retrench his luxury. Therefore, in place of nurſing a ſpirit of diſcontent, how much more commendable is it, whatever our ſituation may be, to practiſe the leſſons of Chriſtian philoſophy. Should we only take the trouble to compare notes with many around us in the world, in all probability, we might often ſee cauſe not to repine, but rather to be thankful for our own ſituation. It is a command of temper that conſtitutes the character of all he-

roes;

roes; and it is a great comfort, as well as an object worthy of particular attention, that if we are not wholly exempted from ſufferings, our conduct under them ſhould be ſuch, as to declare that we wiſh to remove the cauſe of their continuation. I hope you are now fully perſuaded, that I am inclined rather to mitigate your preſent complaint, than to create you new diſtreſſes; and therefore I expect you will favour me with a free and candid relation of a diſappointment that, ſeems to have been attended with particular incidents.

He then began, and gave her a minute detail of the whole buſineſs between himſelf and *Dark-craft*. The treachery of the nurſe roſe to her view in all its deformity; and ſhe felt in her boſom a glow of diſpleaſure, which required all her diſcretion to conceal. However, ſhe called to her aid all the philoſophy of which ſhe was miſtreſs; and aſſuming, as much as ſhe was able, the air of a diſintereſted perſon, made uſe of ſome tender expreſſions, in a condoling ſtrain, aſſured him of the continuation of her eſteem and patronage; and added, that his integrity, ſhe thought, deſerved a much better fate than that

of the cruel injury he had met with. "But Theophilo, "ſaid ſhe," your wife may be ſtill alive." His reply gave a negative to the ſuppoſition: "What would you ſay, if that odious fellow had impoſed upon your credulity, and found ways and means to ſteal the articles he produced to you, as a proof of your wife's incontinency. If you was convinced of this, how would you treat him?" I would pray God to give him a ſight of his wickedneſs, and think he had acted a baſe part indeed. "The refinement of your mind, I cannot help admiring; for ſurely that generous benevolent ſpirit, that tramples down revenge, that triumphs over premeditated villany, or ſilences the clamour of its enemies, is entitled to eſteem, though bewildered by raſh credulity. I muſt own, that I feel myſelf much intereſted in your cauſe; and as I intend ſoon to viſit that part of the world, I will uſe every exertion to recover your eſtate." Theophilo had no great inclination to appear in a place where his misfortunes had been ſo complicated and uncommon; but Blyth-fame inſiſted upon his going, and in his preſent character of a ſervant. When they reached her father's houſe, the whole family

mily attacked the baſe man, as they called him, and threatened to make an end of him, without either judge or jury. Upon your peril, touch him even with one of your fingers, ſaid ſhe, he is my ſervant, and if he has committed any action out of character, juſtice is open, and the law of the land muſt either acquit or condemn him. A warrant to apprehend him was immediately obtained. Blyth-fame attended him to his place of confinement; and when ſhe took her leave, recommended reſignation and a good heart; for that ſhe would ſee him ſoon, and ſafely ſet at liberty. She thought it was perfectly requiſite to ſecure *Dark-craft*; and went herſelf with the party to execute the warrant. She ſurpriſed him over a jovial bowl, with his frothy companions; told him, that his villany was fully detected, and vengeance ready to take hold of him. The keys and the charter were immediately ſecured; and when ſhe came to the apartment where her own nurſe lay ſick, ſhe could ſcarcely reſtrain her indignation. "You wicked woman," ſhe exclaimed, "you are a diſgrace to your ſex: what could have tempted you to treat your foſter child with ſuch unmerited barbarity?

You

You are in a few days to appear before God, the righteous judge of all, whom you have egregiouſly offended: I pray that he may have mercy upon your ſoul, and meet you with a different treatment from what you gave her." She made a candid confeſſion of her guilt; and the taking down of her depoſition did not in the leaſt leſſen her horror: confuſion and terror every moment ſtared her in the face, and in the greateſt agony ſhe ſoon expired. Againſt *Darkcraft*, the proof was ſo clear, that he could not eſcape: He was ſentenced to be hanged. The judges and lawyers were quite aſtoniſhed at the eloquence and addreſs of Blyth-fame; but, notwithſtanding of this, the firſt day of Griffin's trial, produced no great cauſe of exultation. After the Court was diſmiſſed, Blyth-fame made up to Mr Manlius, praiſed his horſe very much, and aſked what might be his value? Thirty guineas, he replied. She immediately paid the money; and as ſoon as ſhe had deliverance, ſhe took a piſtol out of her pocket, and ſhot the horſe dead upon the ſpot. Mr Manlius ſeemed to be out of temper at this mad action, as he called it. Blyth-fame told him, ſhe would

ſoon

ſoon make a public reply to his obſervation. Againſt next court-day, ſhe begged the judges attention to a particular circumſtance; then related the altercation between herſelf and Mr Manlius; and aſked, if they thought her conduct any way culpable, or deſerving of puniſhment? The prevailing voice declared in her favour. Well, ſaid ſhe, by the ſame rule of reaſoning, this man muſt come off clear. I underſtand he has paid ten or eleven hundred pounds for his wife; and if he had ſhot her as I did my horſe, who could blame him? I ſhould think the man that ſold her ought to be the very laſt perſon that ſhould open his lips upon the ſubject. The matter had been ſo nicely ſtated, that neither judges nor jury had any ſcruple to acquit him. She then made a full diſcovery of herſelf, in open court. Theophilo, you have now by the hand Agnes Manlius; after breaking aſunder the clouds of falſe accuſation, we are now upon a level; for if once you made a purchaſe of me, I have now ſaved your life. She then looked to the judges, and expreſſed a wiſh, not to take poſſeſſion of her eſtate, with her hands imbrued in the blood of *Dark-craft*. She then

pleaded

pleaded for a mitigation of his ſentence; which was accordingly changed into perpetual baniſhment.

I ſhall now leave Mr and Mrs Griffin in the country where I found them, and allow them the quiet enjoyment of their own eſtate, with a conſtant flow of invariable happineſs: for I truly think they deſerve no leſs. And as I mentioned in the beginning, that the deſcription is moſtly indebted to the colours of imagination, and not built upon facts; I ſuppoſe this apology will be deemed ſufficient for the liberty I have taken, and free me from the charge of intended impoſition.

The moral it inculcates is quite plain: Though God, in his wiſe Providence, and for ends beſt known to himſelf, allows lawleſs proceedings to rage, and ſometimes to prevail in the world; though virtue has frequently felt the inſults of triumphant vice, and for a while been baſely trampled under foot; we ſee it often, by unaccountable windings, re-aſcending from obſcurity, and coming mildly forward to view; while the wickedneſs of the wicked iſſues in a ſpeedy or diſgraceful end.

We

We ſee the fibres of many falſe plots wonderfully traced through the dark ſteps of artful contrivance, or ſecret machinations; and their deformity expoſed to the glare of day.

The favour of God is always intereſted in the cauſe of virtue: even when ſtruggling with the clouds of unmerited reproach, a conſciouſneſs of rectitude helps much to diſarm the ſting of trial; and what ought to make the purſuit of virtue an object of emulation is, that her votaries are, or ſhould be, adorned with trophies of unfading fame.

Where true affection takes a ſeat in the ſoul, and ſincerity ſecures the key of the heart, ſuch progreſs will ſoon be manifeſt, that the face of the object we love will ſeem to upbraid us, if ever we entertain an improper idea; and criminal deſires will labour in vain to meet with indulgence. The paſſions of the human breaſt are many, and no leſs various in their nature than the colours by which they are delineated. Artifice, under borrowed features, may ſtretch its hand to graſp the prize that is not its due: But the maſk, however artfully decorated, is too thin and coarſe to ſcreen long from detection

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the deformity it would attempt to hide. And whenever we ſee wicked deſigners ſurpriſed in their own ſnare, expoſed in their own dreſs, and diſappointed of their ſecret and infamous intentions,—we rejoice in ſuch diſcoveries, feel ſincere pleaſure at the eſcape of innocence, and bleſs that propitious power, who wiſely overrules the affairs of the world. To all ſingular caſes we attend with a ſort of enthuſiaſm; at the relation of intricate and intereſting ſcenes which touch the heart, the breaſt glows with anxious emotions. When we ſee juſtice impartially adminiſtered, integrity ſnatched from imminent danger, and virtue meet with its deſerved reward,—we find a gratification which yields us more than ordinary pleaſure. In the firſt book of Kings, ch. iii. 19. we ſee a plain inſtance of treachery completely detected. With aſtoniſhment we behold the piercing judgement, and quick fancy, of the wiſe King of Iſrael. Unbiaſed integrity, connected with tender movements of humanity, are amiable qualifications in any character; but much more ſo in perſons of eminence: not that ſuch examples are rare, but becauſe from diſtinguiſhed perſonages they have always

always a commanding influence. Two women appeared before him, claiming the living child: the King intereſted himſelf keenly in this buſineſs, and his ingenuity in finding out the real mother may well be called an acute ſtroke of a happy invention: "He called for a ſword, and ſaid, Divide the living child, and let each have an half: then ſpake the mother, for her compaſſion was kindled towards her ſon, O my Lord, give her the living child, and ſlay him not." Theſe words are richly coloured with the tender feelings of a generous heart. What an affecting ſcene! the agitation of her mind, how difficult to deſcribe! When ſhe ſaw the ſtern hand of death darkly ſtretched forth, to tear the babe of her boſom, from ſharing in her future joy,—anxiety muſt have filled up every painful period which elapſed, and ſerious ſuſpence ſtood trembling for the final deciſion. The ſuperior quality of tender feelings, like the bright beams of the ſun, is expreſſively diſplayed, not only by the radiance of its own power, but by a contraſt with the callous colours of inſenſibility. Rude tracts, and uncultivated mountains, make the beauty of the fertile plain more attractive; we

could not form an adequate idea of the rich materials that compoſed the mind of the mother, had not this unfeeling character of an impoſtor appeared. What an odious picture does the whole of her conduct exhibit! all that ſeemed to give her any concern, was the cenſure of the world; for as to any remains of virtue, or virtuous principles, theſe are altogether out of the queſtion. I bluſh for her barbarity, "let the child be neither thine nor mine but divide it."

What a baſe heart is here brought to view! who can repeat the expreſſion without feelings of diſapprobation? the language and tone of indignation are naturally annexed to ſuch a character. Where no remains of benevolence or modeſty poſſeſs the heart, it is quite impoſſible that ſuch a barren ſoil can produce any of the fruits of piety, or reſpect to God.

Humanity and cruelty are ſo widely different in their nature, that to ſuppoſe a coalition to take place between them, would be no leſs than a contradiction in terms. The pretended mother, while ſhe continued under the ſcreen of night, thought herſelf perfectly ſecure from the blaſt of ridicule. The deceitful gloſs which covered the

mean

mean furniture of her grovelling ſoul, was all the effect of malice, or the ſpume of envy; for the deſtruction of the child, to her, was a matter of moonſhine, while the anxiety it would produce in the breaſt of the mother would occaſion a cloud of ſorrow, and an age of pain. But from a ſtate of painful ſuſpence, her mind was transformed to unexpected tranquillity, by the impartial ſentence which was ſuddenly pronounced: "Then ſaid the King, Give her the living child, and ſlay him not; for this is his mother." The mind that is inured to the paths of virtue, always carries with it the ſureſt antidote againſt the venom of reproach, and every thing elſe by which vice attempts to ſtigmatize it. It is not only neceſſary that wickedneſs be denied applauſe, but that goodneſs be commended in proportion to its quality: for it would be a pity to ſuffer the garland of virtue and religion to remain, or to fade, on the brow of a falſe pretender.

The ſenſible female will require no reaſoning to convince her, that the beginning of ill-habits is no leſs to be dreaded than their concluſion; and therefore will never join in the laugh of

thoſe who affect to be witty, at the expence of humanity, virtue, or religion. She will ſhew no ſhyneſs in acquainting them, that ſuch ſubjects are quite diſagreeable to her taſte; that ſhe is neither out of conceit with virtue, nor yet ready to embrace vice. It was an uſual, but political charge, given of old, to fight neither great nor ſmall; but only the King of Iſrael. So theſe Bolinbrokes, Voltaires, Roſſeaus, Gibbons, and the modern Deiſt Paine, who have openly declared themſelves the enemies of mankind, having ſtudied the ſhorteſt way to anarchy, take every opportunity of making ſavage thruſts at religion, and of wickedly expoſing it as the butt of their ridicule; juſt as if merit conſiſted in deſtroying what is ſacred, and ſeriouſly intereſting to every civilized nation. A profane wit is indeed a contemptible character: in the time of the Pſalmiſt, the *fool* thought the very ſame things that theſe do. And to deſerve the epithet *fool* can be no great compliment. Their prohibited artifices are much worſe than of no value, and therefore ſhould meet with no favour. The learned Biſhop Watſon, whoſe character, as a man of letters, is deſervedly eſtabliſhed,

eſtabliſhed, and whoſe piety and goodneſs of heart are entitled to laſting reſpect, has, with his uſual ingenuity, painted infidels in the deformed colours due to their character; and ſo much to the purpoſe, as one would think ſufficient to make all thoſe in the leaſt tinctured with their principles, bluſh, repent, and attempt reformation, when they take a ſerious view of the pitiful picture which their own character exhibits.

Mr Erſkine, our Ciceronian Orator, that moving library of knowledge and information, never fails, in his public exhibitions, whenever an apt opportunity occurs, to pay this claſs well home; and his reaſoning is ſo clear, his wit ſo genuine, and his ſatire ſo keen, that the wounds he inflicts muſt be ſeverely felt.

A reſpectable character, with whom I have the honour to be acquainted, and whoſe converſation I have often thought a perfect luxury, in talking one day of Deiſtical writers, made this ſenſible remark, "Men's words are ſoon forgotten, but the performances of thoſe who write for the edification of mankind exiſt for ages: when ſcepticiſm ſpeaks with audacity,

and infidelity is ſeen without a maſk, the conſequence is melancholy, and much more dangerous than many are aware of. If ſome will be ſingular, and are diſpoſed to entertain diſtempered and noxious opinions, it would be ſomewhat honeſt to bury their ſentiments in their own breaſts, and not to wound the feelings of others, by a bold avowal of them." This frenzy of deſtroying the ſinews of virtue, or the happineſs of mankind, was long leſs known than it has been of late years; becauſe it ſo glaringly depreciated the dignity of human nature, that it was allowed to lurk in the den of darkneſs, where it ſhould always be confined. I ſhall now take my leave of it, by wiſhing its deluded votaries a more generous way of thinking.

In the early ages of the world, we find meaſures for encouraging virtue publicly eſtabliſhed in many countries. The Egyptians, I think, had once a law which ordained, that the character and actions of thoſe eminently diſtinguiſhed for moral refinement ſhould be ſolemnly canvaſſed before their beſt judges, in order to regulate what degree of fame was due to their memory. No dignity however exalted,

no abilities however extraordinary, could unjuſtly ſeize, in the competition, the prize of genuine virtue. Moral refinement alone was the road to honour, and the character by which their names were eterniſed and raiſed to ſacred reſpect. To ingenuous minds this was a powerful incentive to the purſuit of virtue, and alſo a ſtrong reſtraint to the wicked and thoughtleſs, in the career of vice. Greece had many examples to boaſt of, and the Romans were always liberal in their encomiums and rewards, when female merit reached the pinnacle of approbation. If the diſtaff of Tanaquil, the conſort of Tarquin, was thought worthy of notice in their public records, and conſecrated to the temple of Hercules, as a memorial of acknowledged induſtry, and a copy worthy of imitation,—with the ſame propriety, the Renfrewſhire jeſſamine may be thought a diſtinguiſhed copy of virtue and conjugal affection. What a generous exclamation! "My cloaths, and whatever elſe you chuſe, are before you; but, for God's ſake, ſave my huſband's life!" What feeling heart could behold her on her bended knees,

and

and hear her tender requeſt without ſympathy and admiration!

For the encouragement of virtue, and the reward of merit, it were to be wiſhed ſubordination would take place in the female world, as well as in the ſcenes of civil life. Warriors who ſignalize themſelves in the ſervice of their country, are raiſed to lucrative ſtations, and the rank of nobility. Penſions alſo are given to men eminent for their abilities; while an amiable accompliſhed female, whoſe bright example is of ſuch ſingular intereſt to the ſociety with which ſhe is connected, is not much noticed, excepting by a few of her intimate acquaintances; and, when ſhe is no more, her good actions vaniſh with herſelf. The *bona dea* was a diſtinction inſtituted at Rome, and might have continued with fame unſullied, had it not been for the abuſe it met with from a baſe character.

It were to be wiſhed our amiable Queen, who is an example of ſingular refinement to all her ſubjects, would invent ſome honorary title, or diſtinguiſh ſome of our deſerving females with badges of dignity, correſponding to the character they maintained, and the part they acted, as an incitement

incitement to virtue, and the ſtudy of mental improvement.

So much for the Mental Pick; and if I have made uſe of any unguarded or indelicate thought, calculated in the leaſt to hurt the morals, or wound the feelings of the reader, I hope they will have charity enough to aſcribe it to inadvertency, rather than to a voluntary bias towards immorality: for if I have penned any indecent expreſſion, I may honeſtly ſay, it was more than I either wiſhed or intended.

A falſe mirror, which miſrepreſents its object, or alluring artifices which fear the light, and lead to the precipice of ruin, or help to lull the mind aſleep in the lap of profaneneſs, vanity, or ſelf-ſufficiency, I have conſidered as rude invaders of the happineſs of an accompliſhed female. And, from principle as well as from taſte, I have had a ſincere deſire to keep at a diſtance, if poſſible, from forming an acquaintance with ſuch hoſtile impoſtors. Flattery, the avowed enemy of improvement, which too often ſerves as fuel to feed the flames of levity, I have had no inclination to enter into terms of reconciliation with, nor to join in the excurſion of its conſumptive party.

party. But how far I have kept clofely to ſuch reſolutions, others will be more competent judges of than myſelf. Amidſt the many elegant and learned productions, with which our age and country abound, that my ſimple Pick ſhould meet with favour or indulgence, at the expences of folding together the inſtructive and entertaining pages of approved performances, that merit the moſt ſerious and attentive peruſal, is more than I can reaſonably expect; and therefore I ſhall baniſh ſuch flattering thoughts: for it makes its appearance more by way of a memorial of hints, than a ſyſtem of inſtruction. At an idle hour, or a ſolitary walk, it might help, plain and artleſs as it is, to ſuggeſt ideas productive either of amuſement or improvement. That the female of character and merit may every where meet with the reſpect due to mental beauties, will never be an eye-ſore to me. Though I have not the ingenuity of Ariſtogenes, nor can ſurpriſe Clementina with her own exact reſemblance, as he did Celonia with his handſome looking-glaſs; yet ſhe may obſerve, from this faint attempt of a weak artiſt, what he would

would be willing to perform, if his abilities were equal to his inclination.

I ſhall have no objections that the plains of her reſidence ſhould be richly perfumed with the fragrance of every amiable accompliſhment. May not only the virtues of the new name mentioned in ſcripture, known to thoſe only who receive the heavenly appellation, be liberally imparted to her, but may her happineſs be alſo made ſtationary.

If the external conſtruction of her frame is neat and comely, may the internal temper of her mind be equable and virtuous: May her frame be more laſting, and her beauty more durable, than the tranſient fragrance, or fading bloom of a puny ſummer-flower: May it continue to flouriſh with eternal verdure, and be bright like the ſun in the height of his beauty. That the bleſſings of health and happineſs may ever ſmile around her, and the favour of her God, without an eclipſe, continue her inheritance in time and eternity, is the ſincere deſire of

PHILO GUNA.

FINIS.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM